# JOURNAL OF THE GALWAY ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Volume 50: 1998

**1798 REMEMBERED:-**
THE HUMBERT EPISODE
COL. ROBERTSON'S PLANS
THE GALWAY MILITIA

**QUEEN'S COLLEGE GALWAY:-**
FROM SITE TO STRUCTURE
DODOS AND DISCORD
MEDICAL STUDENT'S MEMORIES

HOMELESSNESS IN GALWAY
KILLADANGAN STANDING STONES
LOUGHPARK 'REVISITED'
WESTERN FORTIFICATIONS

LEACHTA CUIMHNE
PLACE-NAMES IN LARKIN'S MAP
EXCAVATION AT TUAM
MARTIN COEN

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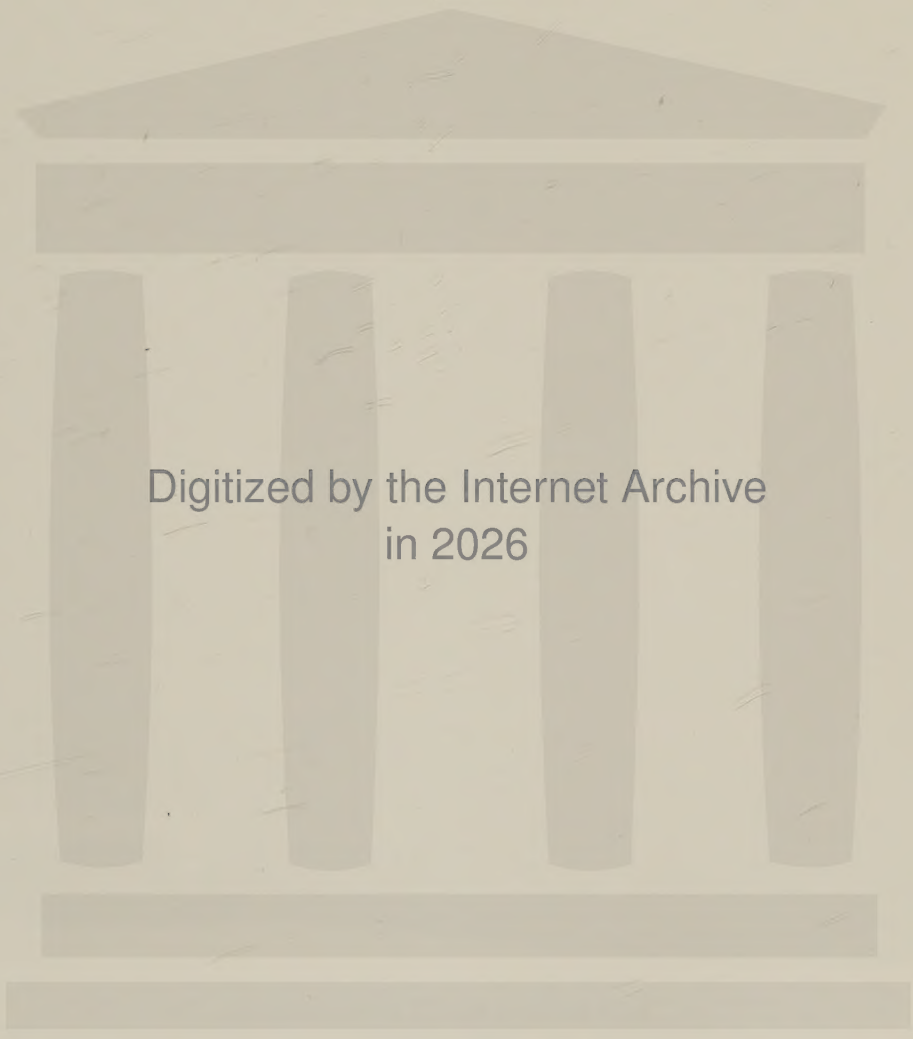
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HUMBERT'S BATTLE STANDARD

Produced in Paris by the wives of Irish emigrés.
Captured by the Armagh Militia on the field of Ballinamuck, 8th September 1798.

*(Regimental Museum, Armagh. Photograph by Pádraig Ó Admhaill).*

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Joe O'Halloran

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# 1798 REMEMBERED

* * *

# CASUALTIES SUSTAINED BY GOVERNMENT FORCES DURING THE HUMBERT EPISODE, AUGUST-SEPTEMBER, 1798: A RE-APPRAISAL

PATRICK M. HOGAN

*The enemy's loss amounts to 1,800 men, of whom 600 were killed or wounded, and 1,200 prisoners; 10 pieces of cannon, 5 stand of colours, 1,200 firelocks and almost all his baggage.*
General Humbert[1]

*The loss to the French in killed and wounded resulted almost entirely from the effect of the artillery, and was afterwards found to have been far more considerable than that of the King's troops.*
General Taylor[2]

On the 23rd of August, 1798, a small French naval squadron comprising of three frigates, the *Médée* (38 guns), the *Franchise* (44 guns) and the *Concorde* (44 guns), dropped anchor in the waters of Killala Bay in full sight of the rugged coastline of County Mayo, a gate-way to the remote province of Connacht, until then but little disturbed by recent events elsewhere in the island.

On board the vessels were some 1,099 officers and men, and a handful of United Irish expatriates, under the command of the able and ambitious General Joseph Amable Humbert. This small expeditionary force was intended to be the harbinger of a number of such expeditions then in various stages of preparation in French ports. Humbert's masters in Paris ordered him to avoid any direct conflict with the superior government forces. He was to employ himself with raising and arming the local peasantry, making contact with United Irish chiefs in a province which was basking in the warm sunshine of an idyllic summer, and the gathering in of a bounteous harvest. The event which transpired provided something very different. In the succeeding three weeks the sequence of events was to assume romantic (and legendary) proportions, which still excite the popular imagination when recalling this particular episode of 'Ninety-Eight'.

On landing at Kilcummin Strand, the thirty-one year old general wasted little time in advancing and seizing the nearby small coastal town of Killala, brushing aside the slight initial opposition without incurring fatalities in his own ranks. In the encounter the defenders suffered the loss of two of their number, as well as the wounding of an armed Church of Ireland parson, the Rev. Mr Ellison, rector of Castlebar, who in displaying in the face of enemy an Achillean-like courage was, ironically enough, the recipient of a musket ball in the heel.[3]

Several days later Humbert set out briskly for the county capital of Castlebar, nearly thirty miles to the south-west, with about 900 of his troops and accompanied by some 600 enthusiastic, but as yet unblooded local volunteers from amongst the peasantry. These were hastily armed and proudly attired in their issue of blue French uniforms which for many would prove to be their shrouds. In the eyes of the authorities it would become the visible garb of treason. Included among the local volunteers was a sprinkling of displaced Catholic refugees from a number of Ulster counties.[4] En route Humbert's advance scouts had a brief skirmish with a detachment from the small Ballina garrison. This cost the latter two wounded and one fatality in the person of another member of the Church militant, the Rev. George Fortescue, a part-time militia officer.

Humbert now abandoned the main road to Castlebar, and on Sunday, 26th August, led by local guides, undertook an exacting forced night march along a rarely used and precipitous mountain track bringing the Franco-Irish army to the outskirts of the town without further incident.[5] Humbert's intelligence had briefed him that government forces had been hastily rushed there from Tuam and Galway, under the command of generals Lake and Hutchinson. They were now strongly entrenched and opposed his further advance. The generals had at this point approximately 1,600 men who could be regarded as being tactically available to them.[6]

In the grey dawn of Monday 27th August, ignoring his explicit orders, the young Frenchman decided to gamble all in one desperate bid. He gave the order to advance despite coming under a heavy artillery bombardment which rendered the outcome highly precarious. From the outset his troops carried the day, as his veterans overran the enemy positions and put to flight forces perhaps twice his own numerical strength. These were largely composed of unproved militia units, local yeomanry, with some cavalry, stiffened by regular soldiers and a number of guns manned by highly competent gunners of the Royal Irish Artillery. The whole affair became known as the "Races of Castlebar", as panic-stricken soldiers hastened for Galway town and Athlone.

The surprise victory sent shock waves through the British establishment. It was to raise considerably Humbert's own credibility in a delighted Paris. His masters concluded that even if the action did not succeed in re-kindling the all but extinguished embers of rebellion in Ireland, the exercise might still prove to be of a sufficiently diversionary order to preoccupy, temporarily, large numbers

of British troops and naval units. This would permit the easier promotion of Bonaparte's grander designs in more exotic theatres, be clearly seen, albeit in a token fashion, to be honouring his messianic pledge of carrying armed assistance to oppressed peoples everywhere.

The victor's initial euphoria cannot have been long dissipating, since the hoped for local support for the revolutionary cause, especially from persons of property and standing, failed largely to materialise. As Humbert received daily reports of enemy troops closing in, however cautiously, from the south-east, he realised that his position in Castlebar was scarcely tenable. In the Franco-Irish camp there reigned a particular sense of puzzlement and disquiet at the continuing failure of the United Irish under the leadership of Col. Jem Plunkett to make any movement. At this point the Frenchman may have come close to abandoning his intention of setting up an interim provisional revolutionary council for a future Republic of Connacht were it not for the unexpected, and welcome arrival in Castlebar on Friday, the 31st August, of John Moore, son and heir of a wealthy Catholic landed proprietor, George Moore coming from nearby Moore Hall, his overt reason for seeking out the French general was to secure guarantees of protection for his father's home and property.

Humbert wasted little time in persuading, or coercing the young man. In his opinion the best interests of all concerned would be safeguarded by young Moore agreeing to take upon himself the Presidency of a provisional council in Castlebar to administer the province of Connacht. This council would be responsible for the maintenance of law and order, the raising of new recruits, and the provision of monies and supplies for the army of liberation.[7]

The French commander now felt free to carry out a hasty withdrawal from Castlebar in a daring if desperate attempt to effect a junction with one of the by now overdue supplementary expeditions. Failing this, his plan was to rendezvous with such parties of rebels rumoured to be operational in the midland counties, in order to combine with them for an attack on the capital city itself. At dawn on Tuesday the 2nd September, the tiny allied force set off on a circuitous route which was to lead them to eventual capitulation on the 8th (after a token show of resistance) to overwhelmingly superior government forces under General Lake. A series of forced marches had taken Humbert's veterans to Collooney, Co. Sligo, where they engaged in a short sharp encounter with the Limerick Militia under Col. Verekker. This ill-advised, though spirited attempt by Verekker failed to block Humbert's passage across the Shannon at Ballintra Bridge, and thence to the field at Ballinamuck, Co. Longford. Those United Irish forces who had taken to the field to support the French in Counties Longford and Westmeath were largely routed by government forces in engagements at Wilson's Hospital and at Granard in the two days proceeding Humbert's entry into Leitrim. Humbert's peasant volunteers who were excluded from the terms of surrender extended to the French paid dearly for their support of the foreigner, both on the field of Ballinamuck itself and in the hot pursuit which followed the final encounter.[8]

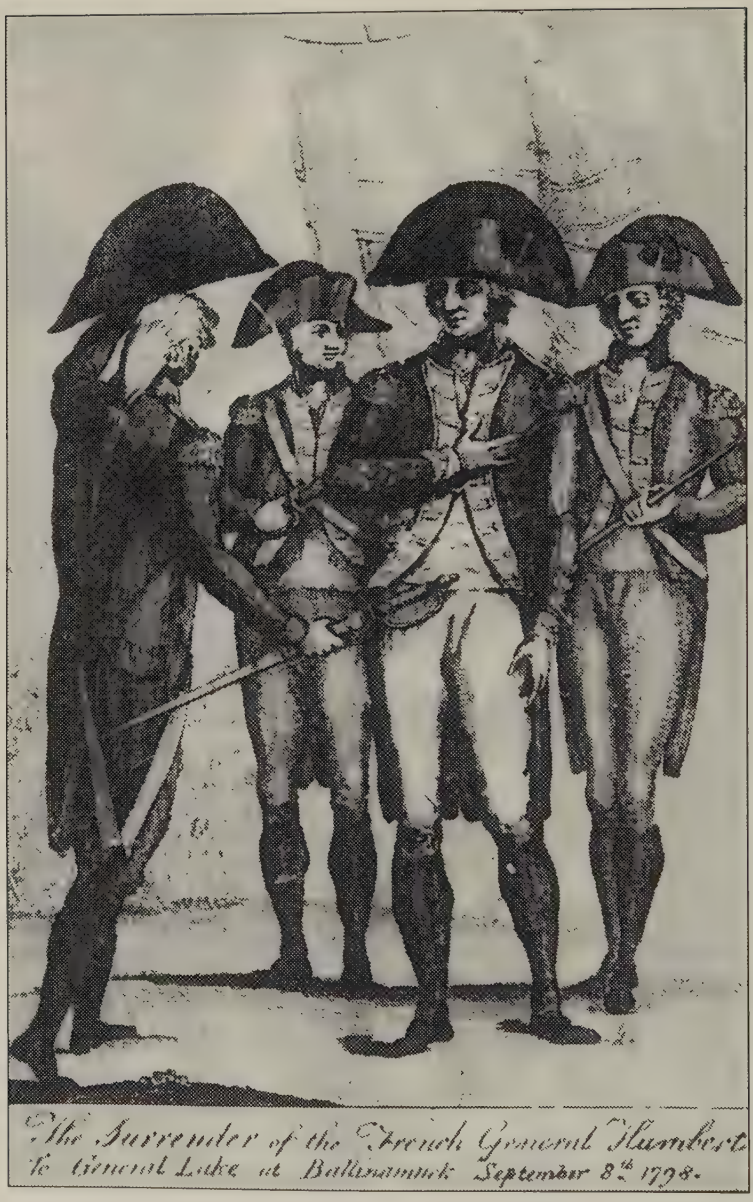


Fig. 1: The above illustration is taken from an eye-witness account of the campaign against the French, entitled: *Impartial relations of the military operations which took place in Ireland in consequence of the landing of French troops under General Humbert, in August, 1798,* by an Officer who served in the Corps, under the command of His excellency, Marquis Cornwallis.

(Reprinted from J. Milliken, Dublin, 1798)

It is ever the fashion for the victor to magnify a victory, as it is for the vanquished to attempt to minimise a defeat. The aftermath of the engagement at Castlebar was to prove no different as the protagonists, true to fashion, played the numbers game. A glance at the respective claims heading this article clearly illustrates this tendency.

General Humbert, as victor, not only wanted to inform Paris of his triumph, but to present it in such terms as would lend greater credence to his urgent request for speedy additional reinforcements to bolster his own tiny force. Brigadier-General Taylor's account sought to put the best face on what was an undoubtedly embarrassing defeat by a numerically inferior force, consisting of professional troops, a handful of local country gentlemen and local peasantry. General Lake, who was the commanding-officer at Castlebar on the day, did likewise, and was quick to apportion the blame for the débâcle between two of the Irish Militia regiments, the Longfords and the Kilkennys. He claimed, with some justice, that these two units had wilted before the determined advance of Humbert's disciplined veterans, thus precipitating the general panic-stricken flight which followed.

A scrutiny of the many contemporary reports of the campaign, including the surviving memoirs of those French officers present, serve only to obfuscate, rather than clarify the number of casualties for government forces during August and September, 1798. Later popular works and folklore do likewise. Some modern historians have opted for the figures given in this contemporary account (below) by a serving office on the staff of the Commander-in-Chief in Ireland, Marquis Cornwallis.

TABLE A

*Return of Killed, Wounded, and Miſſing, of the Troops under the Command of Lieutenant General* LAKE. *Caſtlebar, 27th Auguſt, 1798.*

| | Killed | | Wounded | | | Miſſing. | | | | | | | | Horſes | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Serjeants | Rank and File | Lieutenants | Serjeants | Rank and File | Majors | Captains | Lieutenants | Enſigns | Staff | Serjeants | Drummers | Rank and File | Killed | Wounded | Miſſing | No return of the Carabineers was received. |
| Light Brigade Iriſh Artillery | | 2 | | | 2 | | | | | | | | 12 | 6 | | 32 | |
| Carabineers | | | | | | 1 | | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 25 | | | | |
| 6th Foot | | 11 | | | 2 | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 16 | | | | |
| Fraſer Fenſibles | 1 | 23 | | 2 | 9 | 1 | | 1 | | | 8 | | 146 | | | | |
| Royal Longford Militia | | 12 | 2 | 1 | 10 | | 2 | 3 | | | | | 42 | | | | |
| Kilkenny Militia | | 4 | 2 | 1 | 6 | | | | | | | | 10 | | | | |
| Galway Volunteers | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | 52 | 2 | 3 | 29 | 2 | 3 | 6 | 3 | 2 | 10 | 2 | 251 | 6 | | 32 | |

The 'anonymous' officer is generally taken to be Brigadier-General Sir Herbert Taylor.[9] His figures as tabled, for government losses at Castlebar, although incomplete, are useful for comparative purposes, as in the case of the Fraser Highlanders. He has also listed casualties of four and nine wounded for the Galway Volunteers, a yeomanry corps from the town of Galway.[10]

It is my belief, that probably the most reliable data available today to assist in any fresh attempt to establish an objective and valid body-count of government casualties still rests on a careful examination of a *Return* dated the 1st October, 1798, submitted to his superiors by one George Renny, the Army's Chief Medical Officer in Ireland, covering the four weeks from the 20th August 1798 to the 20th September, 1798, (See Table B). However, the time-frame of the *Return* has apparently been extended by three days to the 23rd September, 1798, so as to include the additional number of government troops killed or wounded in the recapture of the last Franco-Irish-held bastion of Killala on that date. It should be noted that George Renny does not supply any figures in his *Return* for casualties suffered by local yeomanry or volunteer units. These did not form part of the regular army establishment and therefore did not fall within his brief.

The Renny document, by its very nature was not a vehicle for propaganda purposes, being a purely private and internal return, not intended for public viewing. It dispassionately recorded the cold, stark and hard facts. By virtue of his position, a Chief Medical Officer was simply required to faithfully compile for submission to the appropriate authority accurate statistics of the dead and the wounded, their units, their respective rank and the nature of survivors wounds. Among other considerations the subsequent settlement of matters relating to estates and various categories of pensions might well rest on the certified details furnished. There was no room for inaccuracies or embellishment.

Thus for the purposes of historical revision, it may well prove instructive to examine closely, and ponder awhile, the figures in Renny's submission (Table B). There are two categories of wounds specified, namely gunshot and/or puncture wounds. The latter may be taken to include those inflicted by bayonet, cavalry sabre, sword, pike or even some form of farm implement, *eg* the pitchfork.

A quick calculation reveals that gunshot wounds clearly predominated. In the Castlebar engagement for example, (listed as – the County of Mayo), a total of 69 such wounds are catalogued. Does this not indicate the employment of a highly effective French tactic of steadfastly advancing under fire on the enemy lines, yet refraining from discharging their carbines at the foe until they were in such close proximity as to better ensure the most lethal outcome? This perhaps may explain who two Militia units, (the Longfords and the Kilkennys), rated as disciplined professional soldiers, becoming the main recipients of the daunting tactic, broke before Humbert's seasoned soldiers. Did this would certainly appear, if the two puncture wounds listed provide any guidance, that little further general

**TABLE B**

**A RETURN OF KILLED AND WOUNDED IN CERTAIN REGIMENTS FROM 20TH AUGUST, 1798, TO 20TH SEPTEMBER, 1798, INCLUSIVE, FROM THE ARMY'S CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER, GEORGE RENNY, DATED OCTOBER 1ST, 1798.***

| Regiment | Officers Killed | Officers Wounded | Non-Commissioned officers & privates killed | Gunshot wounds | Puncture wounds | Total Killed | Total wounded | Principle engagements |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6th Dragoon Guards | | 1 | | 6 | | 0 | 7 | Co. of Mayo |
| Ist. Fencible Cavalry | | | 3 | 4 | | 3 | 4 | Ballinamuck |
| Roxborough Fen. Cavalry | | | | 5 | | 0 | 5 | Killala |
| Hompeschs Chasseurs | | | 4 | 3 | | 4 | 3 | Ballinamuck |
| 6th Foot | | 1 | 1 | 3 | | 1 | 4 | Co. of Mayo |
| Argyle Fencibles | | | 2 | 3 | | 2 | 3 | Wilson Hospital Co. Meath. |
| Fraser Fencibles | | | 6 | 18 | | 6 | 18 | Co. of Mayo |
| Suffolk Fencibles | | | | 1 | | 0 | 1 | Ballinamuck |
| Armagh Militia | | | | 3 | | 0 | 3 | Killala |
| Downshire Militia | | | | 1 | | 0 | 1 | Killala |
| Kerry Militia | | | 1 | 1 | | 1 | 1 | Killala |
| Kilkenny Militia | | 1 | | 20 | | 0 | 21 | Co. of Mayo |
| Longford Militia | | 1 | | 22 | | 0 | 23 | Co. of Mayo |
| Limerick City Militia | 1 | 4 | 1 | 14 | | 2 | 18 | Colooney Co. Sligo |
| Third Flank Battalion | | | | 2 | 2 | 0 | 4 | Ballinamuck |
| **Totals** | **1** | **8** | **18** | **106** | **2** | **19** | **116** | |

*British Museum Additional Mss. No. 35919. fo. 89. dated October 1st 1798.

resistance was offered. They are hardly indicative of there having been numerous close encounters of the hand-to-hand variety so prevelant in a number of accounts, and ever popular in the folklore.

For the present day researcher, the emergence of some new piece of evidence which appears to meet the criteria of the professional historian, and is then found to be corroborated in whole or in part by some existing and accepted evidence, is often a rare bonus. Such a bonus is always welcome.

The episode referred to above, of the Fraser Highlanders offering stout initial resistance to the French, is worthy of a second glance in the light of Renny's figures for the same event. As can be seen (in Table A) above, Brigadier-General Taylor, quoting from the Commanding Officer at Castlebar, Lieutenant-General Lake's return of casualties, lists 11 Frasers dead and 18 wounded. Taking this a step further, we note that Simon Fraser of Lovat, Colonel of the Frasers, later had a memorial plaque to the fallen soldiers of his regiment placed in the Church of Ireland chapel in Castlebar. It read:

Erected to the Memory of
James Beatty, Angus McDonald, George Munro,
Donald Urquhart, William Ross and Douglas Cameron,
Privates of the Fraser Highlanders, who were killed
in action at Castlebar with the French invaders on
the 27th August, 1798, as a small tribute to their
gallant conduct and indomitable death.
by Colonel Simon Fraser of Lovat.

Colonel Fraser's tribute honours 6 dead troopers, 6 privates in all fell – no more, no less.[11] George Renny's *RETURN* records precisely that same number. Here we see an example of independent corroboration of a reliable kind. Does this lone instance not perhaps dispose the researcher to tend towards the reasonable likelihood that the Chief Medical Officer's statistics in relation to other units may be taken as being similarly accurate? I incline towards such a view. The fabrication of rubbery return figures to London, most certainly would not have been a feature of the bureaucratic regime of Mr George Renny.

* * *

Two centuries on, the Humbert expedition continues to attract our fascination, despite its failure and the punitive aftermath for the province of Connacht. Like some elemental lodestone it retains a strong magnetic force. It continues to attract and generate contrary sentiments of pride and bitter sweetness. Why should this be so?

Perhaps it is because his lone and unexpected victory at Castlebar illuminated ever so briefly the Stygian darkness of what had been a truly 'Annus Horribilis'

for the United Irishmen's Rebellion of 1798? Do the more romantic versions of the saga of Humbert and his heroes continue to provide salving elements of psychological comfort and legitimate pride to be cherished, retained and inevitably mythologised?

The name of Joseph Amable Humbert may conjure up for many an image of a David, whose encounter with a later eighteenth century Goliath at Castlebar was to result in a temporary stunning. This Goliath was to stand more fearsomely over his diminutive opponent on that final battlefield of Ballinamuck.[12]

The Armagh Militia also featured in the final engagement of the campaign against Humbert by contributing to the recapture of Killala on the 23rd of September, 1798, where three of their men received gunshot wounds. (Table B)

NOTES

1 H. Taylor. *Impartial relations of the military operations which took place in Ireland in consequence of the landing of French troops under General Humbert, in August, 1798.* Printed for J. Milliken, Dublin, 1798. p. 56.
2 *ibid.* p. 15.
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9 Taylor, H. *Impartial relations etc.* Dublin, 1798.
10 McAnally, Sir H. 'The government forces engaged at Castlebar in 1798.' *Ir. Hist. Stud.,* 15. 1945. The author supplies some interesting figures for the Galway Yeoman Infantry and cavalry at Castlebar.
11 Hayes, R. *op. cit.* p. 282.
12 Mitchell, J. 'The prisons of Galway: background to the Inspector General's Reports, 1796-1818', for details of intake of prisoners (and number excuted) 'resulting from the events of the previous year' (1798) in *JGAHS,* 49, 1997. p. 8.

# INVASION ANTICIPATED

* * *

# COLONEL W. ROBERTSON'S "PLANS FOR THE DEFENCE OF THE IRISH COASTS & FOREIGN INVASION & TO PREPARE FOR SECURITY, TAKEN OCCASIONALLY IN 1796, 97 & 98"

*(Based on a lecture delivered to the Society on 19th January 1998)*

J. W. O'CONNELL

## DESCRIPTION OF THE MANUSCRIPT

Recently, while examining the rich collection of reference and documentary material for the study of city and county history kept at the headquarters of Galway County Library, I stumbled upon a photostat copy of a fascinating manuscript notebook which is currently in the library of the Oireachtas (MS 8H 21/N. 4373). This notebook was formerly held in the office of the Chief Secretary for Ireland. How it came into the possession of this official is not known.

It is presumably owing to the diligence of former Galway librarian Mary Kavanagh that a photostat copy was made of the manuscript, which is now filed in a steel cabinet devoted to other reference material for city and country history.

The owner of this notebook was Colonel W. Robertson, an officer associated in a military capacity with the Limerick and Galway garrisons during the 1790s. The notebook, measuring approximately $7^1/_2$" x 3", consists of 112 pages, nearly all of which contain text, though in several cases this consists of little more than a few sentences. Pocket notebooks of this kind were frequently used in the 18th and 19th centuries for making quick notes and observations; jotting down stray thoughts and ideas; composing letters: in fact, they seem to have served much the same role as the personal organisers or filofaxes that have become so popular today.

As is indicated by Robertson in several places in the text, the notebook contained rough notes which were subsequently to be written up as formal documents for submission to his superiors. What it give us, in other words, are his immediate thoughts and observations, conveyed briefly and bluntly.

Unfortunately we do not know how the final draft appeared as only the notebook versions have survived.

Roberston's notebook falls into four parts, and what links them is their concern with military matters. The first, the longest and the most important, consists, in Robertson's own words, of 'General Observations on Galway Bay, being chiefly abstracts from reports made to Lord Carhampton & Lieut. General Smith in October, November & December, 1796, when successively commanding the Western Districts'[1].

The second section is entitled by Robertson 'Heads of Memorial to the Marquis Cornwallis for obtaining the Command of a Flank Corps'. Basically, this is what we might describe as a 'job application', but its chief importance to the historian lies in the brief but admirably straight-forward account Col. Robertson gives of his military career.

The third section is entitled 'Observations while Quartered at Geneva Barracks in Spring 1796 not before entered in any Book of the Military and Regimental Occurrences'. In these pages, Robertson sharply criticizes what he judges to be the appalling state of the important Co. Waterford barracks, so far as health and sanitary conditions are concerned; he also examines the persistent problem of desertion by soldiers of the lower ranks, along with recommendations as to how it could be effectively dealt with.

The final section is given the heading, '7th Regiment occurrences at Galway in establishing a system of discipline among the men under the difficulties arising from a want of officers chiefly by means of Company Court Martials'.

From what Robertson writes, it appears that in the autumn and winter months of 1796, the discipline of the ordinary rank soldiers garrisoned at Galway had virtually collapsed due to the lack of well qualified officers, while the officers that were stationed in Galway were setting a very poor example for their men.

It is with the first section of Robertson's manuscript that this article will be concerned, although the biographical information in the second portion has been employed to build up at least a sketchy portrait of the man who wrote it. The text of the fourth section, which is the briefest, is given in note 13.

I would mention one of the most surprising aspects of Robertson's manuscript, which does not strictly refer to its contents but its very existence. In the basic books of the period, or in articles in various journals consulted, I have come upon only two references[2] to this notebook.

In fairness, I must qualify my statement by adding 'so far as I am aware'. Not being an expert on late 18th century military history, my discovery of the manuscript was by means of serendipity. It is indeed possible that historians of the 1798 era, not encountered by me, may also refer to it.

What is offered to the reader is the first transcript, to the best of my knowlege, of the most important section of this very important manuscript, and the only

claim I made is that it shows that Galway Bay played a more important role in the military thinking of the mid-1790s than historians have previously imagined.

Robertson's MS is a remarkable document for several different reasons, of which I will mention just a few.

First of all, it is an eyewitness account of military operations and barrack life during a crucial period in late 18th century Irish history. In particular, it provides us with the observations and reflections of an educated British officer of considerable experience and insight.

Secondly, the contents of the first and longest section of the manuscript provide us with the material for a remarkable instance of 'what if-ery'. For Robertson outlines what is, in fact, a very plausible scenario for an 'alternative' history of the events of the 1798 period. On the basis of his extensive military background, he demonstrates what might have happened if the French had successfully invaded Ireland by landing on the coast of Galway Bay.

What would have been the consequences if this document had come into the hands of either a member of the United Irishmen, or a French spy?

By its very nature it provides an insight into the military preparedness of the troops of the Galway garrison. It also contains sketch plans for fortifying the town of Galway; the old fort on Inishmore - (the possession of which Robertson saw as crucial for either the British to monitor and repulse an invasion, or, in the hands of the French, as decisive in the military success of such an invasion), directions and sketches for gun-boats together which Robertson saw as one of the chief means by which the army would meet such an invasion. The most devastating of all is a candid assessment of a successful French landing and occupation of the west of Ireland, and a point by point analysis of the effectiveness or non-effectiveness of the British military response.

What became evident is that, should Robertson's observations had become known to the rebels and to the French, the events of the 1796-1798 period could have been very different from their eventual outcome.

Put bluntly, British control of Ireland might have collapsed entirely if a force the size of that which weather conditions prevented landing in Bantry Bay in late December 1796 - estimated at 15,000 troops initially, followed by a further 6,000 a fortnight later - had landed on the shores of Galway Bay.

Provided with the information contained in Robertson's notes, the French would have realised how poorly prepared the defending troops were to confront their landing; They would have grasped the importance of Inishmore in controling the Bay, both internally and in terms of the British navy's anticipated response; and they would have gained a first-hand account of the lax discipline, poor chain of command, and simmering disaffection in the ordinary ranks of the military forces.

Lastly, Robertson's manuscript provides the material for a re-assessment of the importance of Galway Bay in the events of the 1798 period. We can see now

that at least one intelligent British officer at that time was convinced that it represented the most vulnerable point in Britain's defence of Ireland. The failed landing at Bantry Bay had as its goal the city and garrision of Cork. The 1798 landing at Killala demonstrated once again that over-reliance on British naval superiority might have proved disastrous.

As we will see when I present extracts from Robertson's manuscript, the sharp mind of the Colonel had detected what he thought might be a fatal complacency on the part of the British military establishment, grounded on naval superiorty. Without mincing any words, he pointed out that once the French had landed a considerable army, and garrisoned Inishmore, British naval superiority would be virtually worthless, especially given the current state of the Irish militia and the Fencibles. This was the navy in which Horatio Nelson had, in 1796, being promoted to the rank of rere Admiral.

The conscientious Colonel also recognised the attractiveness of the invading army's ideology of *liberty, equality and fraternity,* especially if the French, once established in Galway, began handing over confiscated land to the native Irish.

Robertson, who had visited France after the conclusion of the Seven Years War, had been impressed with the way in which progress through the ranks of the French army was based on merit instead of class or family connections, and he believed such a scheme might prove very attractive to the rank-and-file soldiers in the British and Irish armies.

## COL. W. ROBERTSON

Our knowledge of Colonel Robertson is rather limited. His name does not feature in any of the standard accounts of the period. However, we are fortunate that in his appeal to the Marquis of Cornwallis[3], who had been appointed by the British government to the dual office of Lord Lieutenant and Commander-in-Chief in 1798, he provides a version of a military *curriculum vitae,* which, from internal evidence, was apparently written after the crushing of the first rebellion. He refers to military activities during June and July, possibly before the French invasion of Killala.

He writes that he has spent "upwards of 22 years in the service", including five campaigns during the "last war in America", that is, the American war of Independence. Here he had something in common with Cornwallis, who, as Major-General, had commanded an army against the American rebels, and had the dubious distinction of surrendering to General Washington at Yorktown on October 19, 1781, thus admitting the British failure to defeat the rebel Americans.

Robertson writes that both in America and later in the West Indies[4], against the French, he had served in the Light Infantry. He gained his military education at the Woolwich Academy, and interestingly, – "went over to the Continent after the peace (which ended the Seven Years War between England and France) to obtain a further knowledge of the theory of service".

He "came forward on every appearance of war to raise men for the Government, especially in 1794, when the present Corps at Limerick was completed in a short time, and a proposal taken into consideration for completing a second battalion".

Like many ambitious military men at that time, Robertson 'purchased a commission in 1780 and progressed steadily upwards, finally obtaining the rank of Lieutenant Colonel on October 30, 1794, "and the temporary rank of Colonel at the same time".

Robertson informs the Marquis of Cornwallis that he has "upon every occasion made application for a Flank command or of any Corps to be nearest the enemy", and that he finally "obtained this favour from Lieutenant General Smith at Limerick when the French had entered Bantry Bay".

Colonel Robertson next mentions his associations with Galway. He tells Cornwallis that in his experience of forming a Corps at Limerick, which included "the fittest & most effectual attendants of it in artillery and cavalry", he developed a plan of military organisation while he was stationed and commanding at Galway over "many months; and ever since [he has been induced] though the regular channels to apply successively to each succeeding Commander-in-Chief to examine those improvements, and honour me with another command when occasion should offer".

Of his military activities during the 1798 rebellion he writes that "he volunteered with a small body of cavalry and infantry at the breaking out of this rebellion, which marched to Mullingar and defeated a large body of the enemy without losing a man, where a number of men and horses were lost by an imprudent attack the same morning[5]." Shortly afterwards, he "was...appointed by Major G. Morrison to the command of several Yeomanry Corps of Cavalry and Infantry, covering a very extensive district of country without any other troops, and from the Headquarters at Charleville, dispersing any rebellious meetings within that district, apprehending many leaders of the rebellion who held the people in terror and delusion, & encouraging many thousands of the lower classes to return to their habits of industry and peaceable occupation, during the months of June and July last. These people, appearing penitent, and voluntarily giving up their arms, and informing against the seditious, and such as were the chief promoters of revolt in that part of the country."

And that is all he tells us. It may be possible to find out more about the subsequent career of Colonel William Robertson; this I hope to do when an opportunity presents itself.

## THE TEXT OF SECTION ONE OF ROBERTSON'S MANUSCRIPT

As Robertson's notes are written continuously, with only a few headings to indicate that he has moved on to a new topic, I have introduced descriptive headings as a simple form of structural organisation. These are printed in ***bold italic***. Where the headings are Robertson's they appear in **bold** print.

I have also silently corrected a few of the older spellings of names and places in the interests of clarity, otherwise the text is as Robertson wrote it. Where it has been possible to do so, I have added brief explanatory notes. As the manuscript is torn, badly faded and illegible in some places, I have either made an attempt to supply at least the sense of what is unreadable or illegible; this is indicated by the use of [ ]. Where this has proved impossible, I have indicated this by '...'. I have also expanded abbreviations, e.g. which for wch. Finally, where long lines appear in the text they are printed as they occur in Robertson's original notes.

**General observations on Galway Bay, being chiefly abstracts from reports made to Lord Carhampton & Lieut General Smith in October, November & December, 1796, when successively commanding the Western Districts.**
Oranmore 24 Nov, 1796

**Notes on Castles & Villages in the vicinity of Craigana, with proposals for billeting troops**

The principal Castles for communication appear to be, beginning on the s(outh), Dunguaire, Killcolgan, Craiganna, Oranmore, Doughiska (or) Merlin Castle[6] -
Names of villages adjoining Craiganna - and contents of by billeting -

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Dunguaire - | ... | 100 |
| | ... | |
| | ... | 100 |
| | ... | 100 |
| | | 300 |
| Kilcolgan outhouses - the castle unoccupied | | 100 |
| Craiganna | - | |
| no outhouses | - | 100 |
| Oranmore Castle | | 150 |
| Tonroi village | | 100 |
| Doughiska or Merlin | ... | |

Gentlemen having interest in the Castles -

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Dunguaire - | Mr Lambert of Craigclare | |
| Kilcolgan | Mr St. George | - a jury [man] |
| Craiganna | Mr Blake | - a jury [man] |
| Oranmore | —— Do ——— | |
| Douchcusca | —— Do ——— | |

The Billet money allowed for the inhabitants

Names of villages in the vicinity of Craiganna —

| | Billeting | Quartering |
|---|---|---|
| Craiganna Big directly in front | 4 | 25 |
| [Kilcornan] 1/2 mile | | 40 |
| Rinville 3/4 mile | 21 | 50 |
| Garowen breck 1 mile | 6 | 50 |
| Balinamanagh 1/2 sw | 20 | 50 |
| Tonroi | | 50 |
| Monughmore E | | |
| Monughmore W 1 m. n[orth] | | 50 |
| | 417 | |

Such is the capacity of the nearest villages within a mile but Oranmore and Clarenbridge tho' 1 mile 1/2 mile distant by the good road may sooner arrive at the rest -

*Preliminary Notes on the Defence of Galway Bay*

The depth of this Bay is about 9 leagues from Black Head to Oranmore - But the Arran Islands are materially connected with the defence of it - The necessary signal posts must be fixed on N[orth] Arran which commands the whole ... — towards the bay - from thence to Black Head, from Black Head to Galway, and from Ragrenn Hill ... which is [situated] the Danish Fort behind Ardfry[7] the whole s[outh]. coast and bay may perceive when signals for the approach of an army are ... -

All the small bays or inlets are capable of giving shelter to gunboats if pursued by vessels of greater force, and they could not be taken before doing great mischief to an enemy; if forced at last the men would escape on shore by their boat after destroying the gunboat - spiking and sinking the gun -

Oranmore Nov. 1796

Principal objects for quartering the troops ————
Fuel — of course coals and grates must be provided -
Brush wood would be considered ... whenever a market is opened for the ...
Warm bedding of all sorts
Flannel waist coasts -
large contracts should be made for straw for making the old Castles & cabins habitable - The straw to be had in ... principally to the ...
Contracts of oatmeal oats & Hay -
Provisions of the sorts easily had -
The most active preparations necessary firing & [quartition] of Straw ——
N.B. firing alone dependent on by importance of coals —
In order to bring forward these objects Commissioners or Quartermasters Generals must immediately be employed.

Fig. 1: Sketch map of Galway Bay and environs by Col. Robertson, based on an earlier military map by McKenzie. The purpose of the map was twofold: 1) to depict castles and villages along the interior coastline of the bay and their suitability for billeting troops; 2) to provide a visual reference for a military and strategic evaluation of the bay, and 3) to indicate possible landing sites in the event of a French invasion.

The large market flannel to be had at Galway in great abundance at about 1/9d per yard for shirts & night caps, the shirts & night caps will come to about 2/6d
General sketch of the N[orth] Island or Arran [from] Mckenzie[8]
....

***Note: A sketch of Inishmore is pasted at an angle across this page, over some text that cannot be read -***

The next page also contains a ————

Sketch of Arran Road from McKenzies Drafts to serve as a rendezvous for small craft to preserve a depot of stock and stores ————

**(Map)**

The great Island of Arran lies in the entrance to Galway bay about 9 miles s[outh] w[est] from the North Shore, about 9 leagues w[est] of Galway —— Between it and the [mains] is the north sound - The Brannock Islands project 4 m[iles] to the NW.

The S west side is entirely defended by a ledge of rocks of 200 feet high, on the highest rising ground there is a Danish fort — on the pinnacle of the rocks to the N E another Danish fort[9] ——— rocky all round except Port Murvey & Arran Road ——— which is the only place for effecting a landing with safety. The channel ... 1/2 mile broad —

This Island is 8 m long and about 2 broad contains about 1500 inhabitants

**Note: Two facing pages containing sketches of gunboats and various weapons and ammunition - possibly the stocks and stories Col. Robertson has recommended be kept on Inishmore.**
**A blank page follows, facing a sketch map of Galway -**

Line of defence for Galway from the intersected lines of Mutton Island and Hare Island —— Sketch from McKenzies Drafts [made] February 1797 by which an enemy could not advance from the bottom of the bay towards Limerick or Dublin -

**(Map of the town of Galway and its approaches from Oranmore side)**

Galway Nov. 96

*Notes on Gun carriages & Gun-boats*

100 rds of ammunition
A shifting magazine for the powder secured by a little revet under lock & key - for a 3 ... a perfect sq(illeg.) of a foot & 1/2 to be placed in the train of the gun ———— The shot to be placed in round sockets near the axle-tree bearing the whole weight ——— The inside of the carriage to hold the matches, the ... sockets & all the light stores ———

The side arms with strips and buckles along the shafts so that a gun may be mounted on a limber [serving] the whole remaining train amounting to an ....

**Note: Page facing contains -**

Sketches of the Irish Car limber carriage and gun boat carriages for carrying ... guns in ... -

Nov. 5, 97 —— A 6 ... it is now proved can be carried & worked in ... shape upon a limber carriage - carrying 24 rounds of ammunition, 12 on each side of the gun, with side arms & in supposing at most to amount to 1000 ... - to which on good horses is full equal to ... with a line of infantry at five mile an hour —— attended by the usual tumbrils ——

But to carry 6 or perhaps even 12 pounder as [flying] artillery on carriages of this construction over any country ... horse will be sufficient for the 6 pounder to go at the rate of 6 miles an hour, a seat according to the plan being fixed for one artillery man on the carriage, another man to be mounted on a spare horse to guide the leaders.

As 7 men are found fully sufficient for working a 6 pounder on this construction and that the remaining 5 men are to be conveyed with the necessary additional ammunition & - at the same rate, there appears nothing so likely to answer the purpose well, than a carriage made up something in the shape of a jaunting car, which besides the obvious would carry two artillery men on each side ——— The cellar part to contain the ammunition, the foot boards and seats to unshop & by means of strong hinges to unfold & join together in order to form a sort of pontoon for the guns & horses to pass over Ditches or passes to the extent of 10 feet or more. Another man on horseback guiding the ammunition car, the whole requisite for flying artillery on this construction would not exceed far two 6 pounders above half of what is required by the present construction for 1 6 pounder being more complete for service in every respect than any guns which have yet taken to the field at double the expence which such carriages will cost ——

*Notes on Garrisoning the Island of North Aran*

Kilmurvy Bay a place of difficult landing in N Arran & can be easily defended ———— from McKenzies drafts, Feb 97

**(Map of Kilmurvy Bay)**

Nov 6, 97

For artillery men and L.T. double barrel firelocks with Bayonetes on the construction of Fergusons Bayonets[10] for his short rifles last year, would in any shape be most serviceable ——— They may be made with the barrels of our present firelocks but shorter & fixed together in the same stocks —— ...will require a great deal of adjustments before they are made to answer.

**Note: On this same page is a sketch of the Fort of Arran, with text -**

Old Fort at N[orth] Arran where a company of Infantry m[igh]t be quartered & the Barracks easily repaired - (with sketch of fort)

February 1797

The different details to be copied into the Book of General reports - commencing with the opposite page 29, & proceeding on, according to the directions after page 69, leaving a blank leaf opposite to each page where any of the drawings or sketches in these books are mentioned.

Dublin 1st Dec. 1797

**General observations on Galway Bay, being chiefly abstracts from reports made to Lord Carhampton & Lieut. General Smith in October, November & December, 1796, when successively commanding the Western Districts**

Considering the circumstances of Galway Bay, relative to the most important concerns of the Kingdom, in the actual situation of the Country; with the avowed determination of the enemy; there is perhaps no part of His Majesty's dominions, where an attack is more to be apprehended; and where so easy an accomplishment of the Enemy's designs, may in the 1st instance originate, and ultimately extend their unhappy influence to unknown bounds.

## *A Possible Scenario for a French Invasion of Galway Bay*

It is not easy to be supposed, that so intelligent an enemy, is ignorant that a landing may be effected at the lower end of this Bay at Kinvara - (see the sketch page 4 & 5) within two days march of Limerick. That at the upper end of the Bay (in New Harbour) near to Oranmore, there is the safest anchorage, and landing beach in the Bay; and that by going into it, they at once become masters of Galway, from whence the troops in Barracks there must immediately retreat. -

That having gained these two positions, two large tracts of Country come immediately under their power; from whence every man attached to the present Government must retire on their evacuation. The troops endeavouring of course (according to the present directions) to form a junction, with larger bodies of troops for opposing the enemy, when he advances more towards the centre of the Kingdom.

The enemy is most likely to be well acquainted that there are two routes for gaining Ennis. The first day's march from Kinvara, however, is very difficult, one over the Clare Mountains by Kinmaro[11], and the other by Gort, within 7 miles of a fine road.

That on gaining Limerick or the Shannon, that all the back part of the Country will be their own, having the Shannon on the right, the sea and Galway Bay on their left, that circuit of territory of course then falls immediately into their possession, including the greatest part of the County of Clare.

That, on the other hand, landing at Ardfry or towards Oranmore, on the upper end of the Bay, another division of the enemy's force becomes master of an equally extensive Country, - with the reputation and resources, besides, of possessing the large and populous town of Galway, without firing a shot, according to the necessity of the troops there immediately retreating, as already described. -

This district, necessarily so abandoned, being bounded by Loch Corrib on the e & n, the sea & Galway Bay on the w & s, the reflections on leaving such easy conquests are needless to enquire.

The Enemy must be aware that having accomplished their objects, whether the next move may be to penetrate into the interior, or wait the events which may arise there in their favour, they have little to apprehend from the numbers or the combinations of a defensive army, where there are neither depots of provisions, magazines, in any points whatever, where no considerable body of men could be assembled to make a stand, or to supply detachments too sufficently strong to annoy them with any great effect.

The Enemy himself would now in fact stand an Equal chance of being supplied from the Country, whether he chose for a time to remain stationary, in case of receiving supplies, and landing his stores & provisions; or whether choosing to bend his course either to the north, to the east or to the south, as his then situation or the support of insurrection might require such movements.

### *Difficulties that Would be Faced by an Invading Army Considered*

It should at the same time be considered, on the other hand, the probability of the enemy's not being able to come in such force at one point, when he has so many difficulties to encounter, from a superior force at sea, the uncertainties of his getting into any bay of the Kingdom collectively in fleets, during a tempestuous season and when should they even arrive in considerable force, would not our navy speedily come around and take all their ships, probably before they had time even to disembark their troops, their stores & provisions. - In which operations besides, they ought certainly to be very much impeded, and harrassed by our troops on shore! -

To these arguments those who ought not to despair any Enemy, will say, that nothing which the present enemy has done (even within this very short time) was at all probable - That a similar attempt on Cork last year (by the same mode of attack as Limerick may be attempted this year) was only defeated by a violent east wind; when the calculation is, that the west wind blowing on the coast 9 months out of 12, they had a chance of coming in safe, as 9 is to 3 -

That it is not probable their expedition will sail from Brest until by the stormy weather, they are assured from good intelligence, that the coast is clear of any superior force - That the wind which clears them of the channel in Brest, will keep our fleet to the eastward, while it will bear them to any of the bays in Ireland, with a side wind; - where having gained their opening, the heavy ships may remain without, when those directed to protect the landing within the bays proceed at once with a leading wind to their destined points: - where should they afterwards find it necessary to remain, they carry chains in separate links of an enormous size to be joined to protect them from the sea attack, of a superior force, and they have an artillery well provided to defend their operations on shore.

In this situation the enemy has nothing to dread, while almost certain of accomplishing his purpose of landing (having once entered any Irish bay). He therefore deliberately will proceed to the accomplishment of his main objective, that of landing under the guns of their frigates and armed vessels, while the large ships by threatening other parts of the coast, would distract the attention of our army by false attacks; and at last by dispersing, (should a superior fleet arrive) they have every chance of regaining their ports, with a small loss perhaps; while those intended for making good the landing, are left to their lot, either to be successful on shore, and destroy the country, or ships to be taken at anchor or ...! , a matter of small moment in comparison to the mischief of their landing effects.

It may now be observed that it is not likely the Enemy will next time make an attack on the same object as last year; where they might now expect to meet greater preparations, but it is likely He will next attempt, <u>the next greatest object</u> - where he perhaps knows there is no defence - and that too by an easier route than what he must have pursued in the project attack of Cork! - The destruction or capture <u>of the</u>

Limerick stores of provisions, now, being little ... the calamity to have followed the accomplishment of the former objective last year.
Having endeavoured shortly to point out some of the leading causes inducing the enemy to make his main attack by Galway Bay, there is another reason which alone might determine him to this resolution - that with an inferior navy but a superior army, there is no part of Ireland by which there is so ready or so easy an access to the capital: considering, that it is not 100 miles or above 6 days march ... - there would be nothing miraculous to see the van of a French army in Dublin, the tenth day after their fleet was first discovered to be one the coast! -

Such a phenomenon however, could not possibly be expected by any one who reflects that on landing, the enemy must be at a stand by the want of cattle to carry forward their artillery, camp equipage, & provisions, for this coup de main; as he could not reasonably trust to any supplies from the country itself while impeded as their progress ought to be by a well supplied artillery, annoying them on landing, or on attempting to ... army collecting, from all quarters to give them battle at some point with equal numbers; who being already in possession of the Country, are supposed to have if not the whole affections of the lower classes, at least the whole energy of the people, by means of the Yeomanry, and superior armed classes! -

Add to these apparently insurmountable obstacles, the effects of a well appointed cavalry; whenever the Country is in any way open, or where the invaders had neither artillery or cavalry to yield them covering and assistance. In such circumstances, such events may be thought impracticable, and unreasonable to dread. - This effect could certainly not ensue or is even to be dreaded, if in ..., common received opinions, and the visible difficulties to every eye which an enemy has to encounter, are conclusive arguments against his attempts.....
(Note: words are crossed out, new words and sentences written between lines: all this makes this particular section very hard to read in detail, but the sense is quite clear, which I give in the original words so far as it is decipherable, supplying the rest myself, indicated by italics. The sense is as follows - )
*[Often arguments that seem unassailable by any realistic objections, which are, besides, concurred upon by common received opinion, create a sense of false confidence that]* misleads the defenders of a place, to be most frequently surprised, by the very route which was thought impracticable for the art of man to have traced. -

### *The Defence of Ireland: Artillery, Cavalry & the Yeomanry*[12]

But in the present instance let it be allowed that we have to do with a very intelligent enterprising enemy - We may fairly believe that in France they are by no means uninformed of the difficulties they would have to encounter in such an undertaking - But laying aside the hazards they must encounter by sea, and suppose them arrived on shore at the point of attack, what are they at this moment informed, is to be apprehended from the three greatest advantages supposed to be possessed by the defending army: viz, their artillery, cavalry, & national armed support - and Yeomanry.

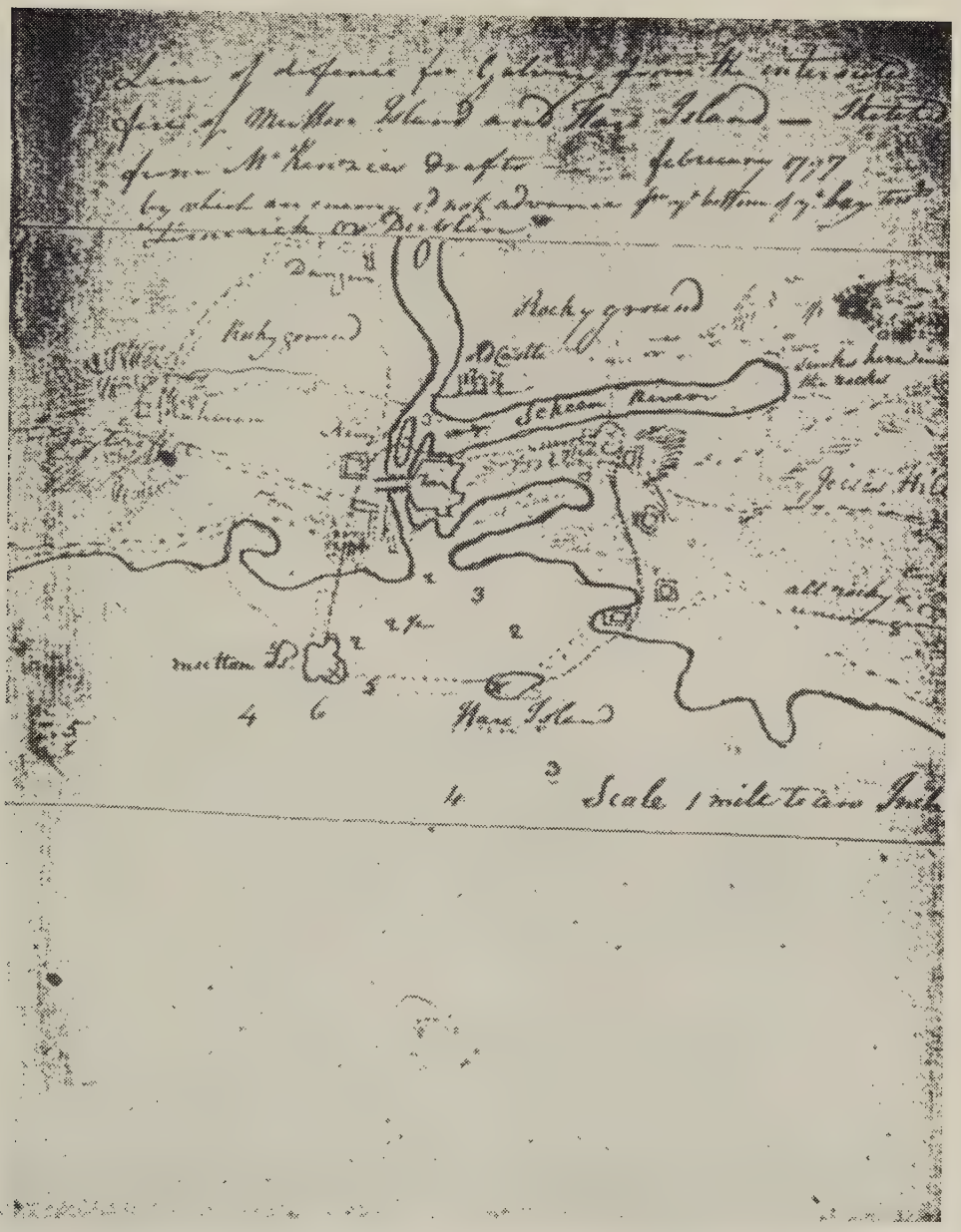


Fig. 2: Col. Robertson's sketch map, again based on an earlier draft by McKenzie, of the military defences of Galway and environs. Note the thin rectangular line he has drawn, linking Hare Island, Mutton Island (south) to a redoubt opposite the west bridge over the Corrib, extending east to a line of four redoubts running north-south to Hare Island.

*A) Artillery*

As to advantage then at first in artillery, it is at present merely ideal; and can only be taken for granted; and it is held so because it should be so. - No field artillery ever was known to be ready for action, without having trained horses in instant, practical readiness, to be sure of transporting the guns, without which all science, the officers, and abilities in the men, can be of little avail. But what is the actual state of the field artillery which is to be brought to act on the enemy at this above point before he had fairly begun his march? No more than the Battalion guns of three or four Regiments, which are with difficulty found in horses, on the most ordinary occasions; - but in such a scene of confusion as invasion produces, the inhabitants will most probably conceal their horses, fearing to irritate a desperate foe, or supposing the guns were then dragged along by the additional gunrigs, the enemy have likewise that advantage and we have reason to suppose their to be more expert cannon than our own, being chiefly composed of 30 men who were about a year ago selected by some artillery officers for each Battalion, and since termed gunners to the Regiment. So that the enemy would be on equal terms, from the first, as to transporting his artillery, and probably would be superior in serving it in all situations which could occur.

*B) Cavalry*

No considerable body of Cavalry being in a situation for assembling quickly, after three days march from the place of landing, the remaining ground in their progress to the capital, in an enclosed country, intersected with bogs, and unfit for the movements of Cavalry. Where the openess of the Country might admit of the Cavalry to act in any large bodies, so as to make an impression on the march of the enemy, there is neither forage or covering to support them during the winter season; when horses coming out from various stables, would soon be undone by the severe night duties. Neither in any inclosed Country, can cavalry be of much service. In no barren Country can they be maintained! Such is a description of the Route between Dublin & Galway as to instance of country, yet if the enemy may be out of the open country, before the Cavalry assembles, and in the inclosed country before they can act.

*C) Yeomanry*

As to the armed national support, consisting chiefly of what is termed a Yeoman cavalry & infantry, it was expected when embodied, that the whole care of the interior, was to have been left to their charge; which would have suffered the more regular troops, to have been assembled on the coast in considerable bodies; so as to have been able to form an army speedily, on that quarter where the main attack of the foreign enemy might take place. But that intention appears by no means to have been fulfilled. — Indeed except in cases of immediate and certain danger, it cannot be expected, that people who live by their employments and professions, should abandon them in any considerable degree, ... being wholely at the expence of the State.

Therefore the laxity, insubordination, and weakness of these corps, are easily accounted for; especially among the infantry. It may here be generally

observed that the nobility and gentry have every reason (who generally compose the Officers and Privates of the Cavalry) to continue their exertions, and still they are most useful; but among the middling & lesser classes composing chiefly the Infantry, there may be no greater inducement among them to persevere both in loyalty and a regular discharge of duty when called, than that they are so far pledged to the cause of Government, having been in general selected on account of their individual good characters, and with their superior stake of property, contrasted to such as on the other hand are the disturbers of the Country; whose vengeance they have sufficient reason to apprehend whenever a landing shall take place.

Thus it may be inferred that, whatever assistance the active force under government is to receive from the Yeomanry (in case of actual invasion, and the enemy landed) there are small hopes of their coming forward previous to that event, in order to have the regular army placed in the best state of preparations to act with a proper effect in the beginning of an actual descent on the coast. Therefore the depots and magazines on the point of attack are what can alone make up for the present dispersed state of the army.

Indeed the Yeomanry of Ireland may be allowed to ask this question — What sort of regular army are we to support? Is it composed chiefly of the Irish Militia, and of British Fencibles - bound to serve in Ireland if required?

When it is answered that unquestionably those are the 2 descriptions forming the gross of the Regular army in Ireland; – The next question may go to their composition, strength, and general rules of cooperation, or what may be more properly styled the regular organisation of an army; – acting under one law — one principle of subordination! ——

For such a general system, must need expected to be the Governing principle of any foreign army, which the French will land in Ireland. It has been established among them since the abolition of the National Guard. If we must confess, that our Regular army in this Country is composed of Militia and Fencibles — ... the majority of officers in neither, have any permanent stake of property, or of rank in the service, or in the Country — The non commissioned & Privates of the Militia have shown evident symptoms of discontent to that very Government which they serve[13] —— That the obedience of the Fencibles is attributed by the Country people to their mercenary situation & which is (several words unreadable...) foreign engagement to act against the liberties of the Country – It may be fairly confessed that such an army until tried at least, and favoured with success, is not that on which an implicit confidence rests in the beginning of invasion without evident marks by its favourable disposition on the point of attack — That it is actually placed in a situation, not only to convince the natives, but the foreign foe, that no invasion can with safety be attempted.

The enemy's knowledge of the sort of troops composing the Irish army, and the numbers of disaffected in the Country, are certainly two of the principal inducements for carrying on the war. [The] other two equally strong inducements likewise will urge them to persevere: the destruction of the existing Government, by increasing the national debt beyond its ... and that they have no other method of employing the armies –

## *Further Considerations on the Defence of Galway Bay*

In this digression there may be an excuse for entering into what does not relate to Galway Bay. But certainly to endeavour at showing the consequences of getting possession of it, is a mark of its great importance abstractedly. For the same system of defence may be followed on every other bay and point of attack in the Kingdom.

The Bay of Galway being in a manner fenced against the assaults of the Atlantic, by the Islands of Arran, it is calculated to afford a safe anchorage for shipping, of a large size in most parts, including an extent of 9 leagues.

By its great breadth, of about 3 leagues, a large fleet might work of it; and the smaller bays leading into the Country adjoining can yield an asylum in all sorts of necessities, to different kinds of shipping.

By the soundings it is seen that an enemy may land all along this coast without interruption. The question then remains, whether if the enemy is supposed to have, or can derive any advantage from coming into this Bay, what are the situations in it, or near it, when a stand should be made.

Having taken a review of the naked state of this Bay by which the enemy can at once gain the interior posts of the Kingdom, with an inconsiderable army, and an inferior fleet, the more pleasing part, of frustrating such an attempt, now presents itself.

But the cause of a needless expence is constantly argued against all proposals, for any one permanent construction of which carries the shadow of preparing by field works, for a fixed resistance. This repugnance in Government, of yielding to the necessity, of overbreaking ground may proceed from the vast and useless sums which of late years have been lavished on fortifications & on works which were placed in many situations, never to be of the smallest use, in the defence of either of these Kingdoms.

In short the general idea is perhaps fatally entertained that all land defence in this way is a job, & no danger is to be apprehended to the Country while protected by a superior navy.

As it is now, however, pretty evident, that Ireland may be attacked by a French army, while their navy is much inferior to that of Great Britain, and that on whatever part of the coast they might land, their progress must be retarded by any posts being preserved in their rear, the necessity of establishing some such posts of attack must appear to those not already infatuated by a blind prejudice to misjudge the real circumstances of the Country.

However formidable on shore, this invading army must at one time be out of their own element. When at sea they must remain so, and until their landing is fairly effected. Therefore, unless every mode of marine defence is prepared to confuse them & take all advantages at first, we do a most material injustice to our own cause.

In all the bays then where there is smooth water, and shoal water, gun-boats would be of the utmost consequence, co-operating with the troops and field artillery on shore. Indeed so much are the circumstances of winds and tides in favour of resisting a landing, that by measures of a well served flying artillery, assisted by gun-boats, properly served, the enemy fleet might remain days, and weeks without being able to effect their purpose, which obstruction would give time for a superior force to come to the point if attacked, in array, that altho' a

partial landing were effected, the body of their army might never be able to advance from the coast.

As to the readiest and most simple means of constructing gun-boats, the plan about to be executed and so far adopted last year at Galway appears still to be the best, and to have been carried on as explained in the sketches on pages 16 & 17 – Where any vessels of 50 tons burden & upwards, could in a few days be prepared to carry a 24 pounder — which being a midships, by no means impeded the sailing or work of the vessel, and could fire at an angle of 50 degrees clear of the rigging –

The artillery men and seamen for this service were particularly noted in a manner best calculated for efficiency and dispatch.

At the same time it appeared that in Galway Bay & its dependencies there is a body of fishermen extending to about 2000 men —— Those in the town amounting to about 600 came forward after taking the oath of allegience, to offer their services in manning the gun-boats, working guns on shore, and granting the use of their own boats for transporting either troops or artillery to any point required.

For this purpose they were classed into several different crews of 50, each with a Captain & Boatswain, for which they received the thanks of the Lord Lieutenant —

Tho' unemployed, one good consequence must be that those men yet consider themselves in the eye of their Country, and of the internal & external enemy, to be publickly pledged to the support of the existing Government. This is a matter which neither they, or other classes of the lower orders, have at all reckoned upon, if left unengaged by either side, in case of actual invasion.

### *Strategic Importance of the Aran Islands*

But the readiest means of defending this Bay ought thus to arise out of its own forces. To contain such a number of the most hardy and expert seafaring men, must either be of the greatest advantage, or of the greatest loss to their Country – Because certain it is that whenever the actual force of the Bay is abandoned to the invaders, such a class of people is the first the enemy will meet with to establish as citizens on the new system of transferred property. —

For example, they will confiscate all those lands on which they find the proprietors non resident, and they will either portion, or give it collectively, to the different classes who support their cause, the inhabitants to be thus divided by themselves: It is impossible to conceive in this instance so apt a boon to the fishermen of the coast, as a grant of the Islands of Arran by the French invading force, to compose part of what he might style, The Hibernian Republic.

As these Islands fall afterwards ... particularly described it will be seen by no means a difficult matter, to maintain them against a very considerable force, should the occupants be furnished with efficient arms and stores. —

It has been already observed that the Islands of Arran [serve] a protection to the whole Bay of Galway from the violence of the Western Ocean, so are they likewise calculated for its military defence.

They are divided into three, but the northernmost Island is of greatest consequence on account of its size and harbour (see general sketch map page 9). The situation of these Islands and their appearance, are singularly striking in every point of view, but as a military post they are of the utmost consequence.

There being in the whole but one inlet properly for shipping, which is the above harbour, or what is called Arran Road, a more particular description of it is necessary —— see page 10, where a sketch from McKenzies draft, points out the extent, sounding, and form of the road, by which the mode of securing these Islands is easily seen, by our having a few heavy guns placed on two or three points – So that round the roads, Kilronan Point, Straw Island, & the point in front of the old fort & town, are manned. This harbour lies at the s.e. point of the island - see page 9 for plan & the general sketch.

There is one other landing place in North Arran called Kilmurvey, on the North side, but the landing there is seldom practicable, & would be defended with the greatest ease (see page 26 including the situation of the Blind Sound of North Arran).

The north Island is about 8 miles long by 2 in breadth. — It contains in all about 1500 inhabitants, and as many head of cattle. Innes Main or Middle Island contains about 400 inhabitants & 300 head of cattle, & is about 3 miles long by two broad.

Innes Shear, the southernmost and smallest Island is supposed to contain about 150 inhabitants & about 300 cattle. So that in the whole it may be said there are upwards of 2000 inhabitants, chiefly fishermen, live in the principal villages near the landing places.

Those who cultivate the stock are dispersed over the interior, and have no occasion to provide hay for the winter provision, these being in constant residence.

The Islands themselves are composed of lime rocks, rising perpendicularly to different heights above the sea; and they [form] a natural defence in every point, of themselves, by iron bound shores, except in those two bays already mentioned in North Arran, which is a sort of beach, unsafe of approach in all weathers, on account of the way the sea rises unexpectedly. There is but one landing place in each of the other two Islands.

Thus it appears if the enemy get possession of North Arran, they are in a situation where an asylum & refuge for their shipping, is in some means already prepared, and from whence they could not only make descents with conveniency, but receive constant reinforcements, in case they find it necessary to obtain this first footing, and afterwards to adopt the plan of maintaining it.

But on the other hand, if we have reason to apprehend the intentions of the enemy to such object & that certain modes of attack must probably prove successful, so ought we to be prepared with similar modes of defence in the first instance, and to leave nothing open which we can so easily shut out against them.

Whatever people formerly kept possession of Ireland, as natives, or conquerors, appear to have felt the consequence of these Islands to the security of the hold they might have on the opposite shore. Thus the Danish fortifications on these Islands appear the largest and most entire of their operations in Ireland, and Oliver Cromwell's additions to some old towers of defense on the harbour of N. Arran show the consequence in which such a post held by his Generals at that time, when no enemy was expected to attack Ireland from the west, in the manner we now have so much reason to apprehend.

Within the last century the barracks and town were occupied by the King's Troops (see page 28).

The Islands of Arran then are the first to become subject to the enemy by an attack thro' Galway Bay in its present situation, and this conquest can be accomplished by any of their small armed vessels with a few troops landing there, while the main body is moving forward to both, or to either, of the two points of attack already mentioned - Kinvara, and New Harbour.

From thence too the earliest intelligence of the enemy approach can be conveyed by signals all along the coast, Arran Roads being besides the fittest station for our look out boats & small crafts.

### *Strategic Importance of Defending the Town of Galway*

The only circumstance which I [induce] the enemy to a landing in any other part of the bay than those two which accomplish such objects so easily, must be from the apprehension of not covering at once the security of their rear, in case of a defended state of Galway —— but from whence according to its present situation, the Troops must immediately retire, in such precipitation too, that very little can be expected from their exertions afterwards.

It is now therefore necessary to observe that by not being under the necessity of abandoning Galway precipitately, the enemy in both points of attack must be retarded, — that no part of the Country on either side of the Bay will at once fall into their hands — That the whole district will look to that post as a rallying point, affording protection on every side; and the whole country must be convinced that the longer it is maintained, the longer time has an army an opportunity afforded to it of assembling, either to the relief of this place if besieged, or to support and reinforce the Garrison of it, if attacking and harassing the enemy while advancing: should he think of leaving such a post in his rear which indeed could not be done with any safety to the invader.

For the lines of defence round Galway, see page 18 —— pointing out interior & exterior lines, ... a line of redoubts. About 20 redoubts for holding 50 men each, distributed at proper distances, with about as many heavy guns to secure the entrance of the forts, on Mutton and Hare Islands, might serve the Country; and destroy the projects of the enemy entirely.

### *Proposals for Defence of Galway Bay Applicable to All Other Bays where an Invading Army Might Land*

What has already been said refers particularly to Galway Bay, because the objects to be accomplished there are greatest; but the same principal of a secure defence, must extend to every point of attack in Ireland, where the enemy's operations must at first be confined to a Bay.

Thus in looking over those bays and points of attack, it is to be considered that until the real attack is distinguished (while resistence is effectively prepared at all points), the main force may speedily be assembled at any point.

For this purpose, a particular detail of the interior regulations for stores of provisions; the certain accommodation of the troops at regular stages; their speedy means of transportation etc, might be entered into, but those objects are secondary to what should be immediately ... as a determination of defence in general, viz., the

repulse or retardment of the enemy's armament upon their very first appearance, first by every effort at sea, with armed vessels & gun-boats, & after this, landing with the most chosen troops of the army, and of the Country to keep them in a perpetual state of alarm & confusion until their progress was entirely retarded, or until equal or superior numbers, gave a fair opportunity of attacking them, in a situation where the invasion had everything to lose, but the national troops army expectation and certainty of being again reinforced.

According to the composition and formation of a Light Infantry Corps, with its different appendages, as described in the Orderly Book of the Light Infantry Companies assembled at Limerick in January 1757, the most effectual artillery, cavalry & irregular sharp shooters, are fully described by drawings and explanations of them.

The speedy support of such a Corps by Grenadiers and other Battalions would soon form a numerous body of such as had gradually been brought into action, and thus accustom our young troops by degrees, to the nature of actions to which if brought in (... - the sense seems to be, if new troops, untested in battle, are confronted with sudden engagements in which they have to face veteran troops...) they must be subject to the panics and groundless alarms which more veteran troops are calculated to impress, on the inexperienced and discordant bands of which our army at home is composed, but into which it is in the beginning very easy to inspire the necessary confidence, by letting them experience the evident success which would follow the proper application of our first advantages on the enemies approach.

Under the idea that the inferiority of the enemies navy, the avowed disaffection of a numerous class of the people of Ireland & the existing Government, Ireland's most westerly position of the British dominions, there can be little doubt, but that the real attack will be on the most vulnerable side, from whence least resistance is to be expected, and the greatest impression to be made.

Accordingly, there appear about eight points on the west coast, of which one or two are most likely to be chosen as the scene of action, either according to the intelligence of preparation for their reception in the other points, or some immediate advantage to be gained by particular circumstances occuring at the time.

To be therefore properly prepared at all points, the stations for flank Corps, and places of defence along the coast, appear as follows for local situation —— : Altho' the enemy should land in Lough Swilley, he cannot leave Londonderry in his rear if made tenable, from whence any advanced or partisan corps, already described should be ready to dash upon him on his first appearance with proper support.

In the same manner to answer for the other principal bays, the most central places for rendezvous and defence may be Ballyshannon, Castlebar, Galway, Ennis, Tralee, Killarney & Bandon.

Should the enemy find himself in a manner closed out from the north to the south by such a chain of posts, the east coast will afterwards be exposed & require equal precautions to be taken for defence.

Now follows the composition of a Light Infantry Corps, commencing page 33 of the Orderly Book of the Battalion formed last winter at Limerick, after which ending at page 69, turn back to page 22 and commencing at General Orders for the Light Infantry Companies concluding with pages 24 & 25.

Dublin, August 1796

N.B. a clear copy of the above observations was given to Major General Hutchinson as Commanding Officer in the Western District for his own & the Commander in Chief's information on the subject of foreign invasion in the month of December last.
N.R.

*(End of manuscript)*

## EVALUATING THE MANUSCRIPT'S SIGNIFICANCE

I think the importance - not to mention the intrinsic fascination of 'eavesdropping' on the ruminations of someone who, 200 years ago, was faced with a very real threat to his and his government's safety - of this text will have become evident to any reader by now. As noted earlier, my chief motivation in publishing this article has been my conviction, which has only increased the longer I have lived with it, of this importance, and my desire that it should be made more readily available so that historians may put it into it appropriate context.

The annotation I have provided is, as will be evident, of the most basic kind, and nothing would please me more than to see someone who does possess the requisite knowledge of the period integrate it within the broader context within which, I am convinced, its significance would be fully appreciated.

Finally, I would mention two areas where I would expect Robertson's text to enhance our understanding. First, I believe that it provides evidence for a fuller consideration of the importance of Galway Bay in the context of the long war with France, first with the immediate inheritors of the revolution and later with Bonaparte. Jane Conroy, in last years volume, has shown the significance of this region at the time of Louis XIV.

John de Courcy Ireland, one of this country's finest maritime historians, has persistently maintained that Ireland's island identity is one of its most significant dimensions, and that a great deal of work has yet to be done in this area, from both the mercantile and military point of view.

Excellent work on Galway's mercantile history is being done, with the pioneering work of Timothy Collins on the Galway Line, published in this Journal, an excellent example of this[14].

However, I have come across very little work - if I may particularise - that has been done on Galway Bay from the specifically military and strategic perspective. I have also been surprised to discover how little has been written about the garrison of Galway, not just at this period, but throughout the long occupation of the town and the county. For example, Bartlett's and Jeffery's superb collection of essays, *A Military History of Ireland*, has disappointingly few references to Galway, and none post-date the events of 1691.

Yet Galway was a garrison town until the establishment of the Free State: where is its history? Who were the soldiers? How did the community feel about them? How far did they integrate with the local community?

I do not know the answers to these questions, but neither do I know where to look for or find them. Robertson's observations, including the other sections that have not been reproduced, supply the raw material for such a consideration, at least for the end of the 18th century. Surely the military presence in Galway, both in the town and in places like Gort, Loughrea, Athenry, Headford, Tuam, Ballinasloe and Athlone, over so many hundreds of years, deserves a much fuller treatment.

## NOTES

1 Lord Carhampton was appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Irish Army in October 1796; he was replaced a year later by Sir Ralph Abercromby (1734-1801). Lieut.-General John Smith had been in charge of the defence of Limerick City at the time of the aborted French invasion of Bantry Bay. Col. Vallancey, who commanded the Tyrone Militia in Limerick, had little faith in his abilities, commenting in a letter written after the threat had passed, "I cannot give you any account of the confusion that reigned there." ('Counter-insurgency and rebellion', Thomas Bartlett, *A Military History of Ireland*, edited by Thomas Bartlett and Keith Jeffery, Cambridge University Press 1996; p. 269)

2 As might be expected, Robertson's manuscript is noticed by Paul Kerrigan in his pioneering study, *Castle and Fortifications in Ireland 1485 - 1945*, in Chapter 5 'The French are on the Sea' 1793 - 1815, in the sub-section dealing with the Shannon Estuary and Galway Bay. However, unless I misunderstand him, he appears to think that the major portion of Col. Robertson's report belongs to 1797-98. In fact, it is clearly dated to October, November and December 1796; the date 1st December 1797 is scored through with a single line. Nonetheless, the general point remains: no other historian, as far as I am aware, has dealt with the significance of the report in the context of the threatened invasion of the West of Ireland - and specifically Galway Bay - in 1796 or in the two subsequent years. Most historians seem to have agreed with General Robert Cunninghame, Commander-in-Chief of the Irish Army in 1796, who gave as his opinion that "In the extent of coast from Galway northward to Lough Swilley [sic], it does not seem probable an enemy would attempt to land." (*Counter-insurgency and rebellion*, Thomas Bartlett, A Military History of Ireland, edited by Thomas Bartlett and Keith Jeffery, Cambridge University Press 1996; p. 259). Such complacency led to the unpleasant surprise in Killala Bay in 1798; similarly, it could have led to a military disaster if the French had agreed to Tone's proposal to invade Galway Bay.

The other reference is found in 'Arkin Fort: the military history of a garrison outpost on Inis Mór', by Paul Walsh, in *The Book of Aran*, edited by John Waddell, J.W. O'Connell and Anne Korff, Tír Eolas, 1994. Walsh's excellent discussion uses Robertson only in connection with Arkin Fort.

3 Charles, 1st Marquis Cornwallis (1738-1805), served as aide-de-camp to the Marquis of Granby during part of the Seven Years War; he was made a Colonel in 1766, and a Major-General in 1771. He took part in the American War, surrendering British forces at Yorktown, October 19, 1786. He was appointed Governor-General of India in 1786, returning to England in 1793 when he was created Marquis. In 1798 he was appointed to Lord-Lieutenant and Commander-in-Chief in Ireland, and after the defeat of the rebellion was instrumental in securing the Act of

Union. He negotiated the Peace of Amiens with France in 1802, and was re-appointed Governor-General of India in 1804, dying in that country on October 5, 1805. His concilliatory approach to the aftermath of the Mayo rebellion prevented much of the cruelty and bloodshed that had characterised the aftermath of the Wexford rebellion.

4 Where he quite possibly served under General Ralph Abercromby, whose notably successful command of the army in the West Indies won him high regard back in London.

5 This would seem to refer to the events of early September 1798, when Mullingar was threatened by rebels troops, about 7,000 strong.

6 In addition to the castles listed below, I also include notes on the other castles in the vicinity of the coast, which were regarded as important places of fortification by Robertson.

**Dunguaire Castle** - originally a castle of the O'Heynes of Uí Fiachrach Aidne, situated in the parish of Kinvara, it came into the possession of the Martyns of Tulira early in the 17th century. The Martyns originally held Dunguaire from the Clanrickards. The Trustees Survey, 1701, lists "Lord Bophin's estates of Dongowry and Roue, and Reihy, parts of Dongowrey, in the parish of Kinvarra and barony of Kiltartan. The lands of Lord Bophin, a title bestowed by James II, on John Burke, afterwards 9th Earl of Clanrickard, were sold, and it is probable that the Martyns purchased Dunguaire at this time. It is not clear who resided in Dunguaire during the first half of the 18th century, but in 1787 Colonel Denis Daly of Raford and his family resided here for a short time. According to Robertson, Mr Lambert of Cregclare is stated as "having interest" in the castle in 1796. This is probably Walter Lambert of Cregclare, eldest son of Charles Lambert and Margaret, daughter of Dominick Browne of Castlemagarrett. Walter Lambert married, first, in 1778 Honora, daughter of Luke Dillon of Clonbrock (no issue); and second, Catherine, co-heiress of James Staunton of Waterdale. Walter Lambert died in 1822. The link with Dunguaire Castle and the Martyns is probably connected in some way with the second marriage of his grandfather, also Walter, to Sibella Martyn of Tulira.

**Kilcolgan Castle** - This was an old de Burgo castle, acquired in 1788 by Christopher French St. George of Tyrone House, along with 100 acres of land, from the Clanrickards for £4,700. St. George demolished the derelict tower house around the end of the 18th century, and built the present Kilcolgan Castle on a site nearby.

**Cregana Castle** - This was another old de Burgo tower house that was occupied by Thomas Redington about the middle of the 18th century, who married Sarah, daughter of Christopher Burke of Kilcornan Castle, near Clarenbridge. After the marriage, Thomas and Sarah Redington moved to Kilcornan where, about 1810, they built Kilcornan House, which now belongs to the Brothers of Charity.

**Oranmore Castle** - Another de Burgo castle, it was leased by Walter Athy of Galway early in the 18th century for 42 years. His daughter and heiress married, as her second husband, Walter Blake of Drumnacrina, Co. Mayo. The castle belonged to the Blakes in 1796.

As did **Rinville Castle**, originally associated with Richard McThomas Oge Burke. The small tower house was granted under the Acts of Settlement to Robert Blake of Ardfry. Sometime after 1681 it was acquired by the Lynch family of Galway.

**Ardfry Castle**, also originally a Clanrickard possession, was acquired by patent dated May 16, 1612, the castle of Ardfry and adjacent townlands, extending south to Ballinacourty, near Kilcolgan. The castle was originally moated and had a bawn. It was altered several times before the Blakes built the first Ardfry House sometime before the end of the 17th century.

**Doughiska, or Merlin, Castle** was held by the Blakes of Galway until 1580, when Nicholas Blake FitzJohn left it to his daughter, Evelyn, who married John Lynch FitzRichard. By 1580 it was back in the Blake family after being first granted by Charles II to John Whaley, who sold it to Francis Blake. His grandson, also Francis, was the first of the family to actually reside in the tower house, in 1731; it was this Francis Blake who named it Merlin Castle.

**Moneyduff Castle** was owned by the Blakes, but it seems to have been in ruins for some time before it was demolished about 1838.

7 From Robertson's description, which is very hard to decipher at this point, what he means when he writes "behind Ardfry" is rather unclear. The only feature near Ardfry that qualifies is described by E.W.L. Holt in his notes on Ballynacourty Parish in JGAHS Vol VIII, No. iii, p. 324, as "a small plantation, enclosed by bank and ditch, on the highest part of Druimedubh. It looks like a rath, but may be modern, though it is always called 'the Fort'. The 1840 O.S. map only shows a circular fence of some sort, in an unenclosed wood." On the other hand, Robertson may

be referring to Rahaowithaun (described in the same article on p. 325), which is "a large rath...in a fine position on the N.W. shoulder of a considerable hill behind Seafort Cottage. It was levelled many years ago...it is said to have been a very high rath". 'Ragreen Hill' could be a corruption of Rahaowithaun (which is itself a pretty evident corruption!)

8 Murdoch MacKenzie, whose Maritime survey of Ireland and the west of Great Britain was published in 1776. He also published a Treatise on maritime surveying in 1774. MacKenzie's maps were extremely accurate and were still being used by mariners and fishermen in Galway Bay until recently.

9 The two 'Danish' forts Robertson refers to were, of course, Dun Aenghus and Dubh Cathair.

10 Captain Patrick Ferguson of the 71st Light Highlanders commaned the Light Infantry company of his regiment during the American War of Independence. One of the finest shots in the Army, he was convinced that the future of warfare depended upon the development of a more effective rifle. Accordingly, he invented the Ferguson Rifle, a breech-loader with an inches ingenous mechanism which enabled it to be fired at a greater speed than any other existing rifle. The bayonet Ferguson designed for the rifle was a flat, single-edged sword blade 25 1/2 long. Unfortunately Captain Ferguson was killed in action in October 1780 and his rifle disappeared from the Army. However this weapon continued to be made for sportsmen for many years afterward, and it would appear that Robertson particularly valued the special type of bayonet Ferguson had fitted to his intention.

11 Kilmacduagh, the monastic site that lies between Kinvara and Gort. The original road to Ennis is joined below Kilmacduagh, and continues south through the village of Tubber.

12 General Sir Ralph Abercromby was appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Irish Army in October 1797. Immediately after taking command, Abercromby set out to review the condition of his army; he was appalled at what he discovered, and on February 26 he issued a general order to all generals and commanding officers in which he declared that the army that was supposed to defend Ireland against a threatened French invasion was "in a state of licentiousness which must render it formidable to everyone but the enemy." As evidence of this, Abercromby pointed to the "very disgraceful frequency of courts martial and the many complaints of irregularities in the conduct of the troops in this Kingdom." It was imperative, he declared, that commanding officers do all in their power to restore discipline. In specific terms he criticised the shocking lack of preparedness of the infantry and the artillery - "No artillery were in a condition to move. Even the guns attached to the regiments were unprepared with horses. No magazines were found". There was "little or no order or discipline"; the infantry officers were "very little able to command" their men. Most disturbing of all was the way in which the army, instead of being concentrated in barracks in the major garrison towns, had been widely scattered through the country, in order to protect the local gentry or perform the police work for which the local yeomanry had been estabished. As a good Scotsman, the Commander-in-Chief also entertained a withering contempt for most of the Irish gentry, whose idleness and local tyranny, he was convinced, was the cause of most of Ireland's troubles.

Robertson's observations echo Abercromby's point-by-point. Did he arrive at his conclusions independently? Did he talk with the general as he made his tour of inspection? What were Robertson's feelings as he saw Abercromby's entirely justified criticisms arousing the storm of criticism that resulted in the General's relinguishment of his command? Did the conscientious Colonel greet the news of Humbert's surprise landing with a sense of deja vu? We will probably never know. But it is surely worth considering what would have resulted if Abercromby's criticisms had been taken on board, even in late 1797 or early 1798, and carried out swiftly and efficiently by officers of Robertson's quality.

13 The following is the text of section four of Robertson's manuscript. Although the account of the difficulties experienced by the Commanding Officer, who is later described as a Colonel, is presented as a particular case, there are grounds for thinking that the central figure in this episode is in fact Colonel Robertson himself. If this is the case - and I would stress that this is only one possible reading, then Col. Robertson would have been in command of the Galway garrison in 1796-97.

"7th Regiment Occurrences at Galway in establishing a system of discipline among the men under the difficulties arising from a want of Officers chiefly by means of Courts Martial

"Upon the ... detection of the swindling faction of officers, tho' the heads were apparently subdued, and dispersed, by the first rigorous measures taken with them at Geneva, still the

infection had sunk far too deep for the evil to be rooted out at once. Among such a ... of men under officers, scarcely any had been born or brought up as Gentlemen. There was not one almost at the head quarters at this time who could be of the smallest assistance to the Commanding Officer. Without any support he now became the commun butt for plunder, & calumny from almost every individual whom he had appointed or employed at the first formation of the Regiment - x

"While constantly occupied in resisting their plans, the remaining time was taken up in correcting the constant irregularities of a set of men who had been driven to every shift by misconduct on the part of their officers, so as to be regardless of character, or the show even of common honesty; but where the immediate dread of punishment withheld them.

"To correct the constant and concealed delinquencies which took place, it occurred to the Commanding Officer, that he could have no other remedy than to proceed on a plan, which would break up at once, the confederacy of villainy; and by exciting a principle of self importance, among the individuals, [now] to make them the judges and discretionary punishers of crimes which in consequence they would from a common necessity of justice and certainty of discovery, avoid practicing in future themselves.

"In execution of this plan, there being about one officer per co[mpany] who might be trusted in some shape with this authority, he became more responsible therefore, being arbitrator in the execution of the ....; when the frequency of crime would have but the more hardened the offenders by a Regiment punishment, it was left in their choice whether they would submit to the decision of their comrades, & in consequence to the discretion of the officer commanding the Co[mpan]y, or to be punished as usual by form prescribed in the Articles of War. The firmer punishment was known to be far less savage, tho' accounted a greater disgrace: - but Company instead of Regiment C[our]ts Martial were now most prevalent by voluntary choice; and by degrees they came to supersede the necessity of the former almost entirely.

"The latter also in a great degree, in a short space of time were seldom resorted to by a real reformation in the conduct and character of the Reg[imen]ts. — As better officers have been gradually introduced, the Regiment interior & economy, was beginning to assume the complexion of a regular Corps, when the schemes of the swindlers and their villainous proceedings came very unexpectedly to receive the support of a Gen[era]l C[our]t M[artia]l at Galway in censoring the Commanding Officer. - The hasty & unjust approval by Government of that sentence & at last the trial of the Comm[andin]g Officer himself on false charges brought ag[ains]t him by a general combination of all whom he had benefited, but prevented from proceeding in the most infamous attempts at frauds, peculations, & falsehood, would have again overthrown every system of discipline established with such difficulty among the soldiers of the Reg[imen]t; but by this time they were perfectly convinced of the injustice which was carried ag[ains]t their Comm[andin]g officer from all quarters & who they were sensible was now suffering on their account particularly, having detected tho in main endeavoured to punish the officers who had robbed them & encouraged their misconduct, they now saw those villains supported in the most scandalous persecution of their Col[one]l; absolutely, for having done his duty! - When the inveterate malice of the remainder of this faction rec[eive]d a check,, by an honourable acquittal to the Col[one]l of every species of charge they could hatch ag[ains]t him for nearly 3 years, the sincere bursts of joy, and satisfaction now discovered by the men was a striking proof that a steady application of impartial justice by the best means which circumstances will afford, is the surest channel to the hearts of the soldiery, & to the real establishment of good order & discipline in a Reg[imen]t. ———————— "

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x At this time likewise, he was particularly called on by the correspondence from Geneva to make constant replies to the complaints made of from all quarters, & the misrepresentations of the agents, Paymaster & others whom he was detecting at a distance proceeded to charges upon and defend himself likewise in the Courts of Law in Dublin. "

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For an excellent discussion of the poor state of the Irish army during this period, see 'Indiscipline and Disaffection in the French and Irish Armies During the Revolutionary Period', by Thomas Bartlett, in *Ireland and the French Revolution*, edited by Hugh Gough and David Dickson, Irish Academic Press, 1990.

14 Far and away the most important contribution has been that of Louis Cullen, especially in such articles as Galway Merchants in the Outside World, 1650-1800, in *Galway: Town and Gown, 1484-1984,* ed. Diarmuid Ó Cearbhaill, Gill and MacMillan, 1984; 'Tráchtáil is Baincéaracht i nGaillimh san 18ú Céad', *Galvia.* V (1958), pp.59-60; 'Tráchtáil idir Iarthar na hÉireann is an Fhraine, 1660-1800', *Galvia.* VI (1959) pp. ; 'The Huguenots from the perspective of the merchant networks of W. Europe (1660-1790): the example of the brandy trade, in: *Dublin Colloquium on the Huguenot Refugee in Ireland 1685-1985'*; 'The Galway Smuggling Trade in the 1730s', in: *JGAHS.* XXX, nos. 1-2 (1962). The following are also of great value: G.A. Hayes-McCoy, 'Three Galway Ships', in *JGAHS,* XXVIII (1958-9). H.F. Kearney, 'The Irish Wine Trade', 1614-15, in *IHR,* IX (1955); D.M. Woodword, 'The Anglo-Irish livestock trade in the seventeenth century', in *IHS,* XVIII (1973); B. Ní Loingsigh, 'Loingsigh Bhordeaux', *Galvia,* VII (1960). Finally, there is the pioneer publication for the *IMC* by John C. Appleby, 'A Calendar of Material relating to Ireland from The High Court of Admiralty Examinations 1536-1641' (1992).

# DEFENCE PREPARED

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## THE GALWAY MILITIA FROM 1793

DAVID C. A. WILKINS

Before the development of a standing army, Britain and her overseas territories depended for defence in times of war upon locally raised citizen forces. The earliest such units, drawn by ballot from lists of all of the fit male population of a district, aged between 18 and 50 and therefore recognisable as 'Militia', were raised in England during Tudor times. From the outset, Militia organisation was on a county basis, under the control of the Lord Lieutenant. Later, when a professional army had evolved, political and economic considerations combined to ensure that the size of the army was limited. Hence, major threats of invasion invariably resulted in the embodiment of the militia forces.

In Ireland, the first Militia regulating statute was in 1715, although earlier Militia, raised on a county basis, had been manned exclusively by Protestant residents. As a measure to counter the perceived threat looming on the continent, resulting from the Seven Years' War, the Militia Act of 1757 was enacted, to re-establish Militia regiments in the counties of England and Wales. A similar measure in Ireland led to county Militia lists being compiled in 1761. These lists have survived for counties Cork, Derry, Donegal, Down, Dublin, Kerry, Limerick, Louth, Monaghan, Roscommon, Tipperary, Tyrone and Wicklow.[1]

There are references[2] to officers, in these earlier corps, for instance, Frederick Trench of Garbally, Co. Galway is shown as Colonel of the Galway Militia; an ancestor of the earls of Clancarty, he died in 1752. So far, it has proved impossible to find any records of the earlier Galway Militia embodiments, and the regiment which is the subject of this article was raised in 1793, as part of the Irish Militia, formed to provide an army of defence and counteract the Volunteer movement, which had run out of the control of the establishment. It was necessary 'to replace the sword into the hands of the executive'. The oath, required of all officers and men, was voluntarily offering to be 'faithful and bear true allegiance'.[3] In due course the wording of the oath was changed to reflect the wider service requirements of the Militia.

Not surprisingly, for a county of such strategic importance with a western seaport as its main town, Galway had been at the forefront of the earlier

Volunteer movement in Connacht, several of the leading landowners being particularly active in raising local units, including Colonel William Persse of the Roxboro' family and Walter Lawrence of Belview.[4]

The Galway Volunteers, a unit raised in the town of Galway, had been embodied on 31st of May 1779 and the following officers were elected - Richard Martin of Dangan as Colonel, James Shee, Deputy Mayor, as Lieut. Colonel, John Blake of Cooleun as Major, J O'Hara, Recorder, as Captain of the Grenadier Company, Mark Lynch as Captain of the Battalion Company, Michael Blake of Frenchfort as Captain of the Light Company and Jasper Lynch as Adjutant[5].
A later resurgence in the Volunteering spirit throughout Ireland, coinciding with the political upheavals developing in Republican France from 1789, thoroughly unsettled the Establishment and was one of the factors which led to the new Militia Act of 1793.

Naturally, the Volunteers felt threatened by the renewed interest in the formation of county Militias, as indicated by the following report carried by the 27th of December 1793 issue of the *Connaught Journal*.[6]

> At a general meeting of the united corps of Galway Volunteers, (Infantry and Artillery) held at the Coffee-house Tavern, in Galway, on Sunday the 23rd inst., in pursuance of public notice, the following Declarations were unanimously agreed to-Captain O'Connor in the chair. Having read in the Waterford paper of the 18th inst.a requisition from the Mayor to the inhabitants to hold a meeting there on the 20th inst., for the purpose of considering the expediency of raising a militia in that city, in consequence of a letter addressed to him by the Right Hon. Mr. Secretary Hobart. And, as we apprehend from the general purport of said letter, a similar requisition may be made to the inhabitants of Galway and other parts of Ireland. We think it necessary to declare, that such a measure is unnecessary and useless here; and that as we have, from past experience, found the Volunteers sufficiently adequate to preserve the peace and public tranquillity of this town during the late war, when the military forces were withdrawn from it, we now pledge ourselves to perform the same service on the like event taking place (or should the times render it necessary) as well as to aid and assist the magistrates, whenever called upon, to suppress riot or disorder, and to enforce a due submission to the laws of our country. We also, with peculiar pleasure, take this opportunity to declare our firm and unalterable attachment to his Majesty's royal person and family, and to the present constitution, as we are of opinion human ingenuity cannot devise a better, provided a real representation of all the people was substituted instead of the present limited and partial one.

February 1793 saw the outbreak of war between England and France. Whiteboy and Defender agitation increased with the start of the war and there was a general revolutionary 'infection' abroad, throughout Ireland, particularly in those counties having Catholic majorities and especially those adjacent to Protestant Ulster, such as Louth, Meath, Cavan and Monaghan. Localised insurrections, attacks on mansions and the theft of arms soon led to Defenders being executed.

When, in 1793, the Irish Government passed the act sanctioning the militia, it was on the basis of service in Ireland and it was to be drawn from both Catholic and Protestant communities, by ballot from the labouring classes and tenantry. At first substitution was not allowed and this led to widespread resistance to the ballot. This was organised by the Defenders and by June of 1793 reports of militia riots were coming from all over Ireland. Sligo and Roscommon were particularly restive and nineteen Defenders were killed in a skirmish at Boyle in the latter county.

Even after the embodiment of the county Militias, concern persisted in respect of the readiness and effectiveness of the local forces should insurrection or invasion occur, as described by Denis Browne of Westport House, in a letter dated 7th October 1793[7],

> General Crosby inspected the South Battalion of Mayo Militia yesterday. He was pleased to express himself as highly pleased with the appearance and performance of the Battalion. It is completely clothed and appointed except with arms which have not yet been sent out to us. I earnestly advise that an immediate order be sent for the removal of the Militia from this county to some other quarters and that this order should not be delayed if possible for a week. The arms can be sent to the quarter to which they are to go and by this method and no other they will contribute as materially as any other body of men in the Kingdom to its defence. They should not be quartered in Connaught at all.

Concessions by the government in response to pressure, soon allowed substitution and voluntary enlistment, but ballot continued to be the preferred method in some counties. Although officers could be either Protestant or Catholic, in practice they were predominantly members of the Anglican Church of Ireland, whilst N.C.O.s and other ranks were mainly Catholic. Ironically, it was this Catholic Militia which was to be the instrument by which Defenderism was defeated. It is noteworthy that Catholic gentry were not immune from attack by Defenders and the secret society was condemned by the Catholic bishops.

As well as the formation of the Galway Militia, the year 1793 saw the raising of the Connaught Rangers, as part of the massive expansion of the regular army which resulted in 30,000 recruits flocking to the colours in the British Isles that year. In an earlier article[8] in this Journal the events surrounding the establishment of the Connaught Rangers were described in detail. Although both regiments were part of the establishment's response to the perceived threats, several factors illustrate interesting contrasts in the manner in which the two units were formed. The Rangers, although raised under royal commission by Colonel the Honourable John Thomas De Burgh, brother of Henry, twelfth Earl of Clanricard, displayed characteristics reminiscent of an army of feudal times. For example, most of the original officers were related to some degree to Clanricard and the commissioned rank granted was in direct proportion to the number of recruits each officer brought (no doubt drawn from

his tenants). This can be inferred from a list of recommendations for Ensigncies in April 1794, involving five county Galway men [9]. Reference is made to the Clanricard Standard being displayed as part of the recruiting process, as well as to recruits enjoying the patronage of the Clanricard family. The twelfth earl had been a strong supporter of the earlier Volunteer movement, having raised a regiment (of volunteers) in 1779. The recruiting posters for the Rangers in 1793 offered a particular welcome to former Volunteers, as well as retired regular soldiers.

Somewhat surprisingly, the Militia, which as a local defence force, can be seen as the lineal descendant of the medieval levies, appears to have been formed in a more professional manner, under the control of the Lord Lieutenant. The earliest surviving muster roll[10], dating from July 1793, shows the first Colonel to have been William Power Keating Trench, M.P. for County Galway from 1768 to 1797 and later to become Baron Kilconnel, Viscount Dunlo and Earl of Clancarty. As well as officers of the names Eyre, Galbraith, Pilkington and Moore, who could be expected to be in the Trench family 'orbit', the first officer list shows a wide spread of family names from across the county. These include Blake, Whaley, Kirwan, Persse, Burke, Grome, Bodkin, Dolphin, Daly, Flaherty, Taylor, French, Shawe, McCartan, Gahagan, and Staunton. Undoubtedly the Catholic gentry were as well represented as the Protestant. Interestingly, the first paymaster was Brevet Captain Henry Persse, a retired regular army officer, who had served in the American war,the brother of the Volunteer Colonel, William Persse, referred to earlier in this article.

In these contrasting formations, both apparently Establishment orientated, we can see the first signs of the new rising star of Clancarty with his British Government allegiance and the late flowering of the feudal power of Clanricard. It was to be almost fifty years before the Galway Militia Colonelcy went to a Clanricard.

Using a formula developed by Lord Hillsborough, the Galway Militia was placed on an establishment of ten companies. Being placed under the command of the Earl of Clancarty, whose family seat was at Garbally, adjacent to Ballinasloe, this probably explains the choice of that town, rather than Galway City as its H.Q. in these early days. From the 28th of August 1794, it was quartered by companies, with nine at Dundalk and one at Carrickmacross.

The order of precedence of the various county regiments of Militia was decided by lot and the Galway Militia became the 11th regiment of Irish Militia. Recruitment continued at various rates in different counties. It was hoped to raise sufficient men by voluntary offering, without ballot or substitution. Different counties resorted to these methods in differing degrees and one, Sligo, even recruited its Militia in a feudal fashion under the direction of Lord Sligo. It became possible to purchase insurance against being ballotted, thus paying for a substitute to serve in one's place.

It did become policy from an early stage to station the Militia regiments away from home soil, to improve their effectiveness, as recommended by Denis Browne. Thus fraternisation with friends and neighbours was prevented. Substantial recruiting parties were regularly sent back to the home county, since inter-county recruiting was discouraged, by making the wives and families of Militia men a charge on the county.

The Militia was a truly national force, the vast majority of its officers and men being Irish. As was the case in England, there was a property qualification for officers. Each regiment was to have twenty Deputy Governors, whose responsibility it was to oversee the formation of the corps. It is not clear whether they were also allowed to be commissioned officers in the corps. Their qualification was an estate with a rental income of £200 or to be heir to an estate of £400 p.a. As far as the other officers were concerned, the qualification varied from a Commandant (Lieutenant Colonel, or Major), who needed £2,000 p.a. or to be the heir to £3,000 p.a., to an Ensign, who needed £20 p.a., or to be the son of a person with £50 p.a., or a personal fortune of £300.

Expansion of the Militia force was fairly rapid; by January 14th 1794 it totalled 10,000 men, a figure which rose to 19,000 rank and file by the end of the following June and 13,366 by February 1795. All items of uniform were made in Ireland but arms had to be imported and it took some time to fully equip all the regiments. In this formative period, the role of the Adjutant was critical and in several instances, Adjutants appear to have been formerly Warrant Officers of the Line. One example was Captain Kay of the Armagh, a native of Lancashire, who was formerly Sergeant Major in the 23rd Fusiliers, which corps happened to be stationed at Armagh when the militia was raised. He was the only drilled soldier in the regiment, from the Colonel down and was responsible for almost everything in its management; acting as Colonel, Paymaster and Adjutant, all in one. Several cases are known of Adjutants' and Surgeons' commissions being sold. Although this was strictly against regulations, the practice was not officially stopped until 1804[11].The Dublin Evening Post, between June and December of 1803, carried an advertisement for the sale of a Militia Adjutancy. From July 1804, a certificate had to be furnished, to show that no pecuniary advantage had resulted from the exchange of commissions.

The second Irish Militia Act was passed in 1795 and allowed volunteers, who were paid for at parish level and recruited by the Colonels. In February 1797 the Militia was at a strength of 18,219 and by February 1798 had further grown to 22,917 all ranks. In 1800 the volunteering of Militiamen to Line regiments began and resulted in the transfer of 8,000 from the total strength of 22,000. This mainly concerned five regiments; 1st. Battalion Royals, and the 18th, 54th, 64th, and 68th of Foot. Later the 27th and 85th of Foot both benefitted as well. This line recruiting effort was repeated in 1805.

The standing orders of the Militia were, in several cases, based upon those of the regular army and the status of the officers was just as high. The following extract from the Limerick's standing orders shows the high estimation placed upon commissioned rank.

> Every gentleman who comes forward to bear a commission in the Militia must undoubtedly be influenced by the most laudable motives; he withdraws his attention for a time from his usual pursuits and avocations to qualify himself for a very important trust; and his fellow citizens, placing a firm reliance upon the exertion of his best endeavours in the public service, are enabled to pursue their usual employment in security[12].

Another development had been the raising of four battalions of light infantry, from the Militia regiments,which dated from early 1798. This corps also had its H.Q. at Ballinasloe, as well as Athlone. They had a total strength of 2,800 in 1800 and 3,369 rank and file by June 1801, serving in 38 companies. This Light Brigade was commanded by Brigadier General W. Scott and represented some of the best and fittest of the Militia forces. It came to be regarded as an elite corps but had a relatively brief existence, being disbanded on 24th July 1806.

Following the Act of Union, extra officers were added to the establishment. This was necessary because many militia officers were Members of Parliament. Since Parliament now sat at Westminster, not at Dublin, such dual responsibilities were no longer tenable. To all the twenty-one units with eight companies and more, which included the Galway, one additional Lieutenant Colonel and one additional Major were added. Each was to satisfy the usual property qualifications and was to be appointed to the establishment by Colonels or Lieutenant Colonels. Some of these extra officers were provided from 'axed' officers of the Royal Irish Regiment. of Artillery[13].

During this time the Galway were stationed all over Ireland, from Dublin to Cork to Enniskillen, as well as occasionally in their home county[14]. This was full-time soldiering, of a kind which had not been envisaged when the militia was first formed. It was only due to the professional way in which the new corps had settled to its duty, that so many line regiments were able to be withdrawn from Ireland, for service in Flanders and the Peninsular.

In addition to their 'home defence' role, the Militia performed several duties, which later became the responsibility of the police. Amongst them were: escorting mailcoaches, protection of bailiffs, coastguard work and that most arduous of responsibilities, the prevention of illicit distilling! All of these became the everyday business of the Militia troops.

When, in the summer of 1796, a French invasion fleet was blown off course by storms and several of the fourty four ships were driven into Bantry Bay, the Galway Militia, together with the Royal Meath Militia formed the local garrison. In the event no landing was made but this was the closest the regiment came to seeing action. However, the event was considered at the time to be of major

Plate 2:
THE REGIMENTAL COLOUR OF THE GALWAY MILITIA
1855 - 1895

*(Courtesy of the Director, National Army Museum, London.)*

significance and, as a result, a commemorative medal was issued by the Friendly Association of Ireland[15].

The practice of purchasing commissions continued; a Surgeoncy appears to have been worth £450 and an Adjutancy £700. Pluralism of a Captaincy with the Paymaster's appointment was also common. Some exchange of officers between different county Militias also occurred occasionally, although probably confined to those with estates in both counties.

During the momentous year 1798, the Galway Militia, in common with the other county regiments, were subject to frequent changes of station, presumably in an effort on the part of the establishment to ensure that no local connections arose which might interfere with the military effectiveness of the force. With the exception of the light company of the regiment, which had been drafted into the Light Brigade, the Galway Militia did not see action during 1798. The four battalions of the Light Brigade were deployed, the fourth seeing action on 5th June at the battle of New Ross in County Wexford, the 2nd at Antrim on the 7th and the 1st and 4th on the 21st June at the decisive battle of Vinegar Hill, when the rebellion in the South was crushed.

Security had so much improved that in June 1802 the Militia was disembodied. The respite however was short lived and by November of the same year the corps 'was to be set on foot again, with as little delay as possible'[16]. Due to expediency it was agreed to allow volunteering at a maximum bounty of two guineas per man, funded by a Treasury grant of £40,000. The earliest enrollment warrants are dated January 3rd 1803 and a large proportion of the former pre-peace Militiamen re-enlisted, with a particularly high proportion of officers. This can be clearly seen from a comparison of the 1802 and 1804 Militia lists[17].

As early as 1804 the Galway had a regimental hospital, as the records contain such references as 'three Privates of Robert Eyre's company sick in the regimental hospital'[17]. In this and other services to its members and their families, the Irish Militia was often ahead of its time. Just a few years later we read of regimental schools and welfare funds.

The years up to 1816 were the zenith of the services of the Irish Militia, but the disestablishment of large numbers of officers and men in 1814 to 1816 caused great hardship. Many of the Captains had been promoted from Ensign rank, as a result of military capability and without the previous property qualification. As a result, the Captains and Paymasters petitioned on two occasions for the payment of an allowance, in January 1815 and again in May 1816. These met with no response. From 1816 the Militia went into 'sleepy hollow', as a result of being disembodied, vacancies were not filled up, until, by 1855 it consisted 'of but a few old cripples, whose one duty was to receive their pay monthly'.[18]

It is known that, resulting from the periodic loss of men to the line, by various drafts, the Militia was augmented between May 1804 and May 1806, to provide the necessary stock of men. All the ten company units, including the Galway,

were augmented to 1123 all ranks, including 980 Privates. Those Militia regiments that accepted augmentation and the draft to the line were enabled to increase their number of field officers (Major and above), as well as N.C.O.s. A further directive announced in November 1806, provided for a fixed annual ten day period, in which the men had to declare their intention in respect to joining that year's draft. This became an annoyance to the Militia, as it left the corps weakened, as well as somewhat unruly.

A Militia officer wrote:-

> Few things are more annoying to a Militia officer, who has taken pains with his regiment, than its diminished appearance after a volunteering. We became accustomed to it however, in due time and it led to patronage and promotion. A certain number of the junior officers obtained commissions in the line and deserving Privates slipped into the shoes of those N.C.Os who had left.[19]

Recurring difficulties with the ballot led to greater use of other methods, including the raising of bounties by means of parish cess payments, to encourage volunteering and hence satisfy the local quota requirements. For example, records survive, which show that at vestries held in August 1803 and November 1807, sufficient sums were raised to provide for a maximum bounty of seven guineas per man. In this manner three men were provided by the parish of Aughrim, three by Killallaghtan, one by Kilgerril and one by Killimore Daly.[20]

By the spring of 1808, the Militia was to the extent of one third, a new force, approximately 9,000 having been added and 8,400 had left. This year saw the first camp since 1805 and at least three Militia regiments volunteered for Spain, including the Galway, North Cork and Londonderry. In the event, these offers brought polite acknowledgment from Dublin, but little else. The total strength of the Irish Militia by 1st February 1809 was 24,768.

The ballot proclamations of 1809-10 were spread over the period 26th August to 8th May, Galway's being dated 22nd December 1809. Lord Clancarty, on this occasion, gave his views to Dublin Castle. ' ... complain of the apathy of the gentry of this county in all public concerns.' He goes on to say ; 'I have no idea of being able to obtain a single man from the ballot, except in the subdivision where I may be myself attending '. He 'thinks they will eventually get the men but not by the 24th of October'. For county Galway, the cost of deficiencies could have been as high as £12,000, at a rate of £30 per man[21].

An unknown correspondent to the *Freeman's Journal* in 1814 complained; "It is well known that, with the exception of the Colonels only, the commissioned officers of the Militia regiments are no longer men of rank and fortune. The change of quarters (i.e. the constant changing), the fatigues of regular duty and the necessity of quitting home, made it necessary for them to quit; but their situations have unquestionably been filled of late more usefully to the country, for they have been taken by young men who have made the service a profession, but these young men have no fortunes now to which they can retire".[22]

Pl. 1: Helmet Plate of the Galway Militia 1878/81. (Courtesy of the Director, National Army Museum, London.)

By the late 1820s, the War Office in London was spending a sum approaching £24,000 annually on the Galway Militia pay, which must have been a considerable element in the county economy, from remittances to families, etc. During 1823, Lieutenants on half pay were drawing £46 p.a. and Ensigns £36. 16s; this during a period when the Militia was disestablished. It appears that by 1852 the Galway had been disestablished for so long that its permanent staff had dwindled to a small cadre, consisting of the Colonel, Clancarty, an acting Paymaster, Sergeant Flynn and an establishment of eight Sergeants, with a small drum, fife and bugle band, about twenty strong[23].

It was the practice for many wives and families of the N.C.Os and Privates to follow the Militia regiments to all their quarters and distances of thirty miles per day were not uncommon. The families were billeted with the troops in the villages of the district concerned and when in camp, which could be either under canvas or in wooden huts. One list of officers[24], provides details of places of residence and the majority had homes in counties Galway, Roscommon and Mayo. It is surprising to find however, that one, Lieutenant James Evans, is noted as residing in 'America' ! His commission dated from 1814, so possibly he was effectively retired.

Detailed records[25] begin again in 1855, when the Colonel was the Marquis of Clanricard and the corps had a staff of 30 officers, 5 Colour Sergeants, 10 Sergeants. 93 Corporals, 20 Bandsmen (drums, fifes and bugles), and 416 Privates. However, it was noted in that year, that 102 men had ' discontinued ' their service in the previous twelve months. From the accounts and returns of the period, it can be seen that the regiment was a lot more than a club for the landed gentry and a source of pay for its members. It ran a school for adults, as well as children, had a well used library and its Surgeons and medical resources were often called upon to assist locally stationed line regiments and the community. The Regiment's Chaplains, by this time were drawn from both the Anglican and Catholic denominations and to a greater degree than in earlier

years, the officers names include many of Irish origin as well as the Anglo-Irish families.

A letter survives, which was donated to the National Army Museum by the late Mr Luke Dillon-Mahon[26], which includes a report written by Colonel Oliver Martyn of the 4th Battalion Connaught Rangers (Galway Militia), describing the presentation of new colours to the Regiment on October l9th 1855. This was relayed by Arthur G. V. C. Chichester to Lord Clonbrock:-

> 'The Battalion paraded in Eyre Square for the presentation of colours by the Marchioness of Clanricarde. Lord Clanricarde was in command. Lady Clanricarde stood upon a platform facing the Hotel. The Guard of Honour was commanded by Lord Dunlo. The colours were escorted from the lower portion of Eyre Square, where the Battalion, 800 strong, were formed up in quarter column to the terrace, where Lady Clanricarde stood, who addressed the two senior ensigns who carried them. There was no blessing of the colours, or religious service. At the close of Lady Clanricardes speech, the band struck up,' God Save The Queen' and three cheers were given for the Queen. There was no trooping, as there was not room to form line. The Regiment marched off with their new colours and there the ceremony ended. That night, Lord and Lady Clanricarde gave a most successful Ball to the whole County, at the Railway Hotel. All the rank, beauty and fashion, not only of Galway but of Mayo, Clare and the King's County were present. No pains were spared and for years after it was greeted as the most successful ball ever given in Galway. Programmes were got up for the occasion, in the old colours of the Regiment, Scarlet and Yellow.'

Following the Haldane reforms of the army in 1881, the Galway Militia became the 4th Volunteer Battalion. of the 88th of Foot (The Connaught Rangers). Its H.Q. became Galway City and its uniform was changed to green facings, from the yellow facings of pre-amalgamation days. The Roscommon Militia became the 5th Volunteer Battalion., with its H.Q. at Boyle and the North Mayo Militia became the 6th Volunteer Battalion.[27]

There are virtually no records of the designs of the colours of the Galway Militia. In the 18th century, the colours of the Irish Militia Regiments are thought to have followed the English pattern and usage, at least in respect of the Regimental Colour. English Militia, invariably, during this period, had the coat of arms of the Lord Lieutenant of their County on their Regimental Colour. The Ordnance Issue books of 175O, when the Militia battalions were permanently regulated, state "Silk Colours, one, a union, (flag), the other the Lord Lieutenant's arms. Oil skin cases for ditto, lined with beize". Green appears to have been the usual colour for them.

In Ireland, Before 1801, the Royal Cypher, 'G.R.', with a crown above it, seems to have been used as the precursor of the Union Flag. From 1801 to 1871, when the Militia of Great Britain and Ireland was transferred from the Home Office and Lord Lieutenants of counties, to the control of the War Office, the Sovereign's Colour was universally the Union Flag, usually in the centre of

which was a circular disc or roundel, surrounded by a Union wreath of roses, thistles and shamrocks and bearing the Royal Cypher. The Regimental Colour, or 'County Colour', as it was by then usually known, was the same colour as the Regimental uniform facings. In the case of the Galway Militia it would have therefore been yellow. It bore, in addition to the universal Union in the upper left hand corner, as in line regiments, either the Lord Lieutenants arms, or some county emblem, or the arms of the county town. From 1881 onwards, the Militia battalions bore colours similar in design to those of the associated line regiment, but without the battle honours and badges awarded for war service.

Only one stand of Galway Militia Colours, carried between 1855 and 1896, is known to survive (See Pl. 2).[29] These are presumably the colours referred to in the report mentioned above. Another is thought to have been in the possession of the Dillon family of Clonbrock and to have hung for many years in the hall of their mansion.[30] This appears to have been destroyed when the house was burnt[31].

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# QUEEN'S COLLEGE, GALWAY 1845-1858: FROM SITE TO STRUCTURE

JAMES MITCHELL

In the course of a debate in the house of commons concerning education, on 19 July 1844, the prime minister, Sir Robert Peel, took the opportunity to comment as follows on the restricted availability of university education in this country. 'So far as the education of the laity of Ireland is concerned – I am speaking now of academical education – looking at the population of Ireland – at the increase of people – comparing the means of academical education in that country with the Continent, or with those two portions of the United Kingdom with which we are more intimately acquainted, England and Scotland – I must say that I think the means of a similar education in Ireland are comparatively and relatively inferior.' He concluded his remarks with an assurance that steps to improve the situation would be undertaken without delay: 'I trust that we shall, at an early period of next Session, propose means for increasing academical education'.[1]

The institutions envisaged in Peel's commitment were referred to initially as 'provincial colleges'. Because of the requirements of staff and students, it could be assumed that each would come to be located in the vicinity of one of the larger centres of population. Apart from the long-term educational, social and economic benefits which the colleges might be expected to confer on their neighbourhoods, their construction would provide considerable employment. In view therefore of the declaration made concerning impending legislation in their regard, it is surprising that it was not until late that year that efforts were made in Galway to have a college located there.

The initiative in the matter came from a correspondent, Bernard Murphy, who had an open letter addressed to Sir Valentine Blake published in the *Galway Vindicator* of 16 November. Blake, who lived at Menlo Castle, was one of the two members of parliament representing the borough of Galway; Murphy may have been the legal practitioner of that name, with an address at Woodquay, who had commenced his career in 1809.[2] He had decided to go into print, he wrote, because of 'an anxious desire to direct public attention to an affair of great importance to our common country, which seemed to me to be forgotten in the multiplicity of other matters for the general good, which at present engage public attention'. The subject in question, he stated, was the strong probability

that the railway would continue to be extended westwards from Dublin and would, in the foreseeable future, reach Galway. (Rail passenger service between the two centres was inaugurated on 1 August 1851.) 'We cannot', he proceeded, 'prepare ourselves better for all the good likely to flow from that great and useful project than by arousing the gentry of the province to endeavour to procure for us the inestimable blessings of education by means of a Provincial College, and thus enable our people to avail themselves of the mighty benefits which railway communication will be sure to confer upon the industrious and educated portions of society.'

Presumably in part response to such urging, the Galway town commissioners – as recorded in their minutes – resolved on 12 December: 'That a committee of seven be now appointed to consider and report on the steps that should be taken towards the establishment of a Provincial College in this Town'. The report, which reads as follows, was duly received and approved on 9 January 1845.

> That we recommend the Board to memorial the Executive for the establishment of a Provincial College in Galway, being the Capital of Connaught, and further that steps should be taken to convene a Meeting of the Public on Monday, the 3rd of February next, to promote the object and that our Secretary do solicit the attendance of the Gentlemen of the County.

In the event, the proposed public gathering failed to take place because of confusion among its organisers. However, the matter again came under consideration at a meeting of the commissioners held on 6 February. As it happened, they were already engaged in promoting the extension of the railway to the town, and, as the realisation of that objective required that a deputation should travel to London to meet with the board of trade, the following composite resolution was thereupon passed.

> That the petition to Her Majesty for the establishment of a Provincial College in Galway, as now read, be adopted, and that the Gentlemen composing the Deputation from Galway to London on the rail-road project be requested to present it and to solicit the co-operation of the Representatives of the Town and County and of Andw. H. Lynch, Esq., and the Noblemen and Gentlemen connected with the Province who are now in London.

Twelve members of the board, together with the four parliamentary representatives for the borough and county, were named as comprising the deputation; the memorial was duly entrusted for formal conveyance to M.J. Blake of Ballyglunin, the other representative for the borough.[3]

The new session of parliament had opened on 4 February; the speech from the throne on the occasion formally announced 'the Policy of improving and extending the Opportunities for Academical Education in Ireland'. The first reading of the Academical Institutions (Ireland) Bill was moved by the home secretary, Sir James Graham, on 9 May. In the course of his address he stated that it was proposed to recommend 'the establishment of three provincial

Colleges in Ireland'. Having remarked 'I should say Cork would naturally be the site of one of the Colleges for the south of Ireland', he continued as follows. 'Her Majesty's Government have considered also that it was expedient not to overlook the claims of the west of Ireland. The exact site of the College for that district of the country, as in the case of the south, I do not pledge myself to, but leave open for future consideration; but speaking under this reserve, I should say that either the city of Limerick or the city of Galway would be the best spot for establishing the College for the west of Ireland.' However, since on three subsequent occasions in the course of his address he referred to Galway without mentioning Limerick – once alluding to 'the Colleges of Cork and Galway' – it would appear that, from the outset, Galway was the preferred location. 'As to the north of Ireland', he observed, 'I think it will be possible, and I hope probable, that arrangements may be made for establishing this third College at Belfast'. He then went on to deal with the question of the capital sum which the proposed undertaking would involve. 'I should say, for the purpose of building or of taking possession of buildings and fitting them up for the uses and to the extent we contemplate, and upon the principles I have stated, that somewhere about 30,000 *l.* for each of the three Colleges will be sufficient; but I take the outside, and say the expense will be 100,000 *l.* for the three – that is, for the purposes of building and founding.'[4]

The *Dublin Evening Post* pronounced unhesitatingly in favour of Galway on 13 May in an editorial on 'The New Colleges'.

> We confess we are not a little surprised that another city in Munster should be mentioned, even inadvertently, as the site for one of the Colleges. Is Connaught to be left out of the calculation? Are all the young people beyond the Shannon to be compelled to betake themselves to the North or the South for Collegiate Education? No, if there be three Colleges, Galway is entitled to one – and we have little doubt that Galway will ultimately be selected.

Two days later, on 15 May, a public meeting, which had been convened by the high sheriff, took place in Galway. It was held 'for the purpose of asserting the claims of this locality to the establishment of an Academical Institution for the province of Connaught'. Some speakers expressed their concerns at aspects of the bill; one, a barrister, said his reservations had been confirmed by O'Connell's denunciation of it three days previously at a meeting of the repeal association in Dublin. (On that occasion O'Connell had decried the proposed colleges as 'these new Godless academies' – adding, approvingly – 'Sir Robert Inglis [MP for Oxford University], characterised the measure as "a gigantic scheme of Godless education" '.) However, when it was pointed out that the sole objective of the gathering was to attempt to secure 'the selection of Galway as the locality', it was agreed that the motion be carried.[5]

A small, private meeting took place nine days later, on 24 May. It was reported on, as follows, in the local press.

> The members of parliament connected with this province, and particularly with Galway, together with other noblemen and gentlemen, met on Saturday at the home of Lord Clanricarde, in London, to form a deputation to wait on Sir R. Peel to urge upon him our claims for the College intended for the province of Connaught ... The deputation having been favoured with an interview, we learn upon private authority that the Premier received them with the utmost courtesy and promised them that the College for this province should be nowhere else located but in this town.[6]

The Catholic bishops had, in the meantime, been considering the bill and, at a meeting held in Dublin on 23 May, adopted two resolutions. The first stated that 'anxious as we are to extend the advantages of education, we cannot give our approbation to the proposed system, as we deem it dangerous to the faith and morals of the Catholic pupils'. The second resolution was to submit a memorial to the lord lieutenant 'suggesting and soliciting such amendments in the said Bill as may be calculated to secure the faith and morals of the students'.

At the outset of the second reading of the measure, on 30 May, Graham announced that 'He was bound to state that the adoption of the most material of the alterations, suggested in that memorial, appeared to his Colleagues and to himself to be inconsistent with the principle of the Bill' – which was that the colleges were to be strictly undenominational. In concluding the debate, Sir Valentine Blake – a repealer – was clearly conscious of the difficulty of his position. 'He would', he stated, 'vote for the second reading', adding, however, that 'He was not satisfied with the Bill; he hoped considerable alteration would be made, and that the Government would not hurry it through Parliament.'[7]

That rejection of the amendments sought by the bishops, following on the castigation by O'Connell of the 'Godless academies', served to influence public opinion in Galway to question whether to support the movement to have one of the proposed institutions located in the town. Such uncertainty mirrored the result of the meeting of 15 May and can be seen in the similarly-evolving attitudes of the two local journals, the *Galway Vindicator* and – more explicitly – the *Galway Mercury*. In its issue of 7 June, the editor of the latter wrote: 'We put it to the friends of the plan, how can they expect it to be received when it is declared by Sir James Graham that in its material features no alteration will be made. This was the answer to the memorial of the prelates and it is vain to expect general support to that which has met with their unanimous and general disapproval'.

The third reading of the Colleges (Ireland) Bill was carried on 10 July – its title had been changed in committee (but did not include the designation 'Queen's'). In the course of his speech on the occasion Peel referred to its fundamental principle of undenominationalism. 'This I look for from this measure, that independently of the academical advantages it will confer, I do fondly trust it will be the foundation of an improved feeling between those who have hitherto been separated by religious differences.' He then went on to recall the decisive

character of the multi-denominational support received from this country which had effectively assisted the passage of the Maynooth College Bill on 2 May of that year, thus providing that establishment with a capital sum and an increased annual grant (8 & 9 Vict., c. 25). He singled out Galway for mention as an instance of the vital support for that measure which the government had received on the occasion. 'I will take Galway, from which county I presented a petition. That is, perhaps, the most Roman Catholic county in Ireland, but comprising many Protestant Dissenters; but there has been at all times less acerbity of religious feeling there than in almost any other part of Ireland. There has been on the part of the higher classes a desire to live together in peace and amity, and their example has extended to the lower orders; and the consequence is, that there has been less of feud and animosity in Galway than in any other part of Ireland.' It would appear to follow from that assessment, which he summed-up as 'the social harmony which prevails in Galway', that it was there he expected the college for the west to be located.

In commenting on his reference to Galway, Sir Valentine Blake recalled to the prime minister that 'before the announcement of the intention of the Government to found these Colleges was made public, he took the opportunity of communicating to the right hon. Baronet certain measures by which great advantages would accrue to Ireland'. Having pointed out that his suggestions included 'the establishment of Colleges', he added that 'he still hoped that Galway would have a University, although he confessed he did not now expect those advantages from any such institution which it would confer if it were based more on religion'.[8]

The fact that the bill had now passed the commons served to confirm the editor of the *Galway Mercury* in his stance. The issue of 19 July declared: 'In conclusion now, we state it as our conviction that it would be better for Ireland to remain yet for a century without Provincial Colleges than to suffer her youth to run the risk of having their religious tenets corrupted by the diabolical and treacherous system of education he [Peel] is now endeavouring to force upon us...'.

The government clearly wanted the measure enacted without delay; it passed the house of lords on 24 July and received the royal assent on 31 July as the Colleges (Ireland) Act (8 & 9 Vict., c. 66).

The effect on the *Mercury* was to induce a volte-face – obviously in response to public opinion – as seen in its issue of two days later, 2 August.

> We understand there is a movement on foot to make another demonstration in favour of having one of the Provincial Colleges erected in our town. We sympathise deeply in this effort. Men may differ as to the principle. None can deny the advantage of the vast expenditure incidental to the building of a College here. Thirty thousand pounds would be a great boon to our people, and the annual outlay for the support of professors and the lodging and maintenance of pupils, is a thing not lightly to be lost. We trust, therefore, that our people here will make a

> good stand in the matter. The Bill is law. It has made no provision for the building of the Colleges in any particular locality. Lord Monteagle is working for Limerick. Tuam and Ballinasloe have been named. Let us be up and stirring. To make our city the centre of intelligence and an university town is surely a great object. Is it second to a railroad? Both are best and we shall have both if we are alive and active. The requisition for a public meeting will be left for signature at various places and we hope it will be amply signed.

The meeting was duly convened and was chaired by the high sheriff on 7 August, 'to take into consideration the propriety of sending a memorial to government on the subject of making Galway the locality in which to erect one of the proposed new Colleges'. According to the *Mercury*, of two days later, the attendance was reminded that a meeting had previously been held concerning the subject, in May; 'the only thing now remaining to be done was to have a memorial signed and forwarded as soon as possible'. A draft memorial, which had already been drawn up, was thereupon submitted for consideration and was adopted.

The town commissioners decided to second the efforts of that public assembly. At their meeting held on 14 August it was resolved: 'That the Chairman do write on behalf of this Board to the Marquess of Clanricarde representing to him the solicitude of this Town to have one of the New Colleges erected here; the attempt made by the inhabitants of Limerick to have that city preferred; and entreating him to use his influence to counteract that attempt and have Galway preferred'.

* * *

Under the terms of the act for establishing the colleges, it was the responsibility of the commissioners of public works – subject to the approval of the treasury – both to acquire the sites and provide the buildings. On 19 August, the chief secretary for Ireland, Sir Thomas Fremantle, directed that the commissioners (usually referred to as the board of works), be requested 'to send down an experienced officer to the Towns of Galway, Limerick and Cork, with instructions to make enquiries at those places and report to the Irish Govt. as to the facilities afforded in each town for the construction of one of the Colleges under the Bill which has lately passed the Legislature'.[9]

Accordingly, on 25 August, John Radcliff, the board's commissioner for buildings, together with Jacob Owen, its architect and engineer, having inspected potential locations for the college at Cork, arrived in Limerick. The *Limerick Chronicle*, of two days later, merely noted that 'Messrs. Radcliff and Owen, of the Board of Works, inspected several sites in this locality, whereon to erect the college', adding, 'The Commissioners have left for Galway, where, it is understood, the college will be built'. However, in reporting a meeting of the corporation held on 1 September, the same journal recorded quite a different

opinion. 'The Mayor informed the meeting that Mr. Radcliff, of the Board of Works, with Mr. Owen, who, by order of Sir Thomas Fremantle, were examining as to whether any institutions would be handed over, or eligible sites obtained, for the erection of the new Provincial Colleges, had been speaking to him and (without either expressing an opinion as to that effect), he was led to suppose that Limerick was the most eligible, and in all probability would be, the place selected for the erection of one of the intended institutions. He suggested that the council would renew their application to Sir Robert Peel, and impress upon government the peculiar advantages of Limerick as a site for one of the buildings.'

The two representatives of the board arrived in Galway on 27 August. The subsequent issue of the *Vindicator* records that they examined a number of sites within half a mile of the town, expressing particular interest in one situated at College Road, adjacent to the Erasmus Smith Grammar School. Later, at the rooms of the town commissioners, they met a hastily assembled group of 'several of our most respectable townsmen, who otherwise would not have been aware of their arrival'; these 'expressed their cordial willingness to give every aid for the establishment of the College'.

The official inspection led the town commissioners to endeavour, at that crucial stage, to rally as many influential helpers as possible. At their meeting on the day following, it was resolved:

> That the best thanks of this Board be presented to Mr. Blake [MP] for the interest he has so kindly taken in forwarding the views of the people of Galway in this respect and generally, and that he be requested to continue his kind exertions and enlist with him as many Noblemen and Gentlemen connected with Galway as he possibly can to influence the Irish Government to have one of the Colleges erected in Galway, and that Mr. John Blakeney be also advised of these proceedings and of the visit of Messrs. Radcliff and Owen in reference to sites in or near the Town for a College.

The John Blakeney referred to, a member of the commissioners, was then in Dublin arranging for the presentation of the memorial which had been adopted at the public meeting of 7 August. In a letter written on 29 August to a fellow-member, in Galway, he gave an account of the interview.

> The Galway memorial, on the subject of the New Colleges, was this day presented to the Lord Lieutenant, at the Viceregal Lodge, in the Park, and His Excellency, without pledging himself to support any particular Province or County, still so expressed himself as to evidently disclose that he is favourable to Galway. The injustice of giving to the province of Munster two-thirds of the Academical advantages intended for the whole of Ireland was brought under his notice and appeared to have weight with him. He inquired particularly respecting the prospect of pupils being found in our county sufficiently numerous to justify the erection of an institution on a scale so extensive as the Colleges are intended to be established upon.

The deputation comprised eight members, the petition being read by Sir Valentine Blake. 'The very fact of having one of these Colleges established in Galway', Blakeney wrote, 'will be of immense advantage to all those interested in obtaining a railway communication between the east and west of Ireland.' The letter was published in both Galway papers. The *Vindicator* observed that 'It would be ruinous to the prosperity of Galway to be deprived of her position as the Capital of Connaught, and another city, not within but merely bordering on it, made the centre of its Education'. The *Mercury* declared: 'Opposed though we are to the system on which these Colleges are proposed to be established, we cannot permit the claims of any other locality to be paramount to those of Galway, wherein a well-regulated scheme of education could be encouraged and fostered'.

On 30 August, the day after the interview, a communication was sent by the board of works to Fremantle, containing details of the sites inspected at his request by its two representatives, who clearly had carried out their work thoroughly and expeditiously. At Galway eight sites had been examined; it is clear that three, at least, were in the neighbourhood of the Erasmus Smith Grammar School at College Road.[10]

* * *

Despite the report in the *Mercury* that 'Tuam and Ballinasloe have been named', no formal request for consideration as a suitable seat for the college appears to have been submitted on behalf of the latter. The *Tuam Herald* of 31 May had supported the claims of Galway over Limerick as the location: 'We are only surprised that Limerick was at all named, for in every respect Galway is the fittest locality that could be chosen for one of those colleges'. However, in the course of a letter dated 20 September of that year, Fremantle remarked to Peel: 'The memorial from Tuam recommending that the Connaught college should be placed in that town has been forwarded by me to Ld. Clanricarde. It is a very poor production, not numerously signed and I do not perceive the name of any person of influence – one gentleman writes J.P. after his name'.[11] The use of the name of the province – inserted as an afterthought – would appear to indicate that Limerick was not then in consideration, at official level, as the location. The *Vindicator* of 11 October stated that the memorial had been signed by 'the leading inhabitants of Tuam, including both Catholics and Protestants'.

* * *

Speculation was by then developing that the government would soon proceed to nominate a president and a vice-president for each of the three colleges so that they should be in a position both to co-ordinate their efforts and to assume responsibility for each in advance of its inception. In Galway it was decided at a

special meeting of the town commissioners on 28 October 'to take into consideration the necessity of adopting a memorial to government to have Galway selected as a fit and proper place for one of the New Colleges'. The motion was, however, merely referred to in passing in the minutes of the regular meeting which was held two days later; the fuller account in the *Mercury* of 1 November shows that the reason for not proceeding with it lay in the divergence of views expressed concerning the subject on the occasion. A pragmatic approach was advanced by one member. 'I am decidedly opposed to the system of education, nevertheless I will vote for sending forward a memorial in favour of Galway being selected as the locality for the College. The people of Limerick are exerting themselves, and will succeed if we are apathetic or indifferent.' Another member found he could not agree: 'He himself was in favour of having the building in Galway, but he could not approve of the principle upon which it was founded'. The chairman gave it as his view that 'unless they were unanimous, it would be better not to agitate the question' and the motion was withdrawn.

In the event, the fact that a further memorial was not forwarded made no difference to the outcome. The same issue of the *Mercury* reported: 'We have just heard that Government has determined upon selecting Galway as the locality for the Institution, and that the Rev. Dr. Kirwan has received his appointment as President'. Just over a week later, on 10 November, the *Times* announced: 'Mr. Walter [*sic*] Berwick, an assistant-barrister, and a barrister of some eminence, it is confidently stated, has accepted the office of Vice-Presidentship of the Galway College'.[12]

* * *

The *Vindicator* of 5 November, reflecting on the decision that the college was to be built in Galway, recorded the names of those who had been the principal participants in the campaign to bring about that result. 'Among those who took the earliest part in promotion of what has been so fortunately achieved, we cannot forbear referring to the High Sheriff [P.M. Lynch], to Mr. B. Murphy, Mr. MacNevin [a barrister], Mr. Gunning [a member of the town commissioners], the Rev. Mr. D'Arcy [vicar of the collegiate church], and, we should add, previous to the decision of the Hierarchy on the system, our venerated and patriotic townsman, the Rev. Mr. Roche [parish priest of St Nicholas, East].'

The *Times* also referred to the same topic on that day. It attributed the decision to locate the college in Galway to the action which had been taken by some thirty-four magistrates, resident in the county, just over a week before the Academical Institutions measure was first introduced in parliament; they had (as noted, above), submitted a memorial expressing strong support for the Maynooth College Bill which was experiencing vigorous opposition in its

passage. Peel employed the memorial to advantage on 2 May when the motion that the Maynooth grant be taken in committee was under discussion; 'the subject', he pointed out, 'had already been debated ten nights'. 'He held in his hand', he told the house, 'a declaration which had been imperfectly signed, from the shortness of time which had been devoted to the subject, but this declaration was signed by Protestant and Catholic landlords of the county of Galway, the greatest Roman Catholic county of Ireland in point of numbers of the Roman Catholics there ... he found that such persons expressed their satisfaction at the course pursued by Her Majesty's Government.' The motion was then put and carried.[13]

The long-term influence of that memorial was assessed by the *Times*, on 5 November, as follows. 'It will be seen that the pretensions of Limerick as the site for the western college have been altogether overlooked, although there is no doubt that the system would have had a fair trial in that quarter, inasmuch as the Roman Catholic diocesan, Dr. Ryan, is believed to be a warm advocate of mixed education – a fact which ought to have outweighed any minor objection to the locality, as contrasted with the capital of Connaught. But perhaps there was some debt of obligation to be discharged; something in the nature of a *quid pro quo*. It may be recollected, that pending the discussion in the House of Commons of the bill for the endowment of Maynooth, and when Protestant England was up in arms against Sir Robert Peel, the gentry of Galway, headed by Lord Dunsandle, came gallantly to the rescue of the Premier, and in a declaration which told with wondrous effect in a crowded house, recorded their thanks to the Minister for the boon which they said was to neutralize agitation ... .' It was to that memorial that Peel had referred on 10 July, on the third reading of the Colleges (Ireland) Bill.

* * *

The appointment of architects for the individual colleges was at that time under consideration; on 11 December the secretary of the board wrote to John Benjamin Keane, who resided in Dublin, informing him that he had been selected to design 'the proposed new College at Galway'. His contract specified that he was to be responsible for 'designs, estimates, contracts and superintendence, at the usual architect's commission of five per cent on the amount of the contract'. He was a member of the Civil Engineers Society of Ireland (later, the Institution of Civil Engineers of Ireland), and also a founder-member of the Institute (later, the Royal Institute) of the Architects of Ireland. His extensive practice included churches, courthouses and country houses.[14] His ground plan, upper-floor plan, and elevation of the west front of the college were published in the *Report* of the board of works for the year 1847;[15] they are here reproduced, in reduced format, in figures 1, 2 and 3, respectively.

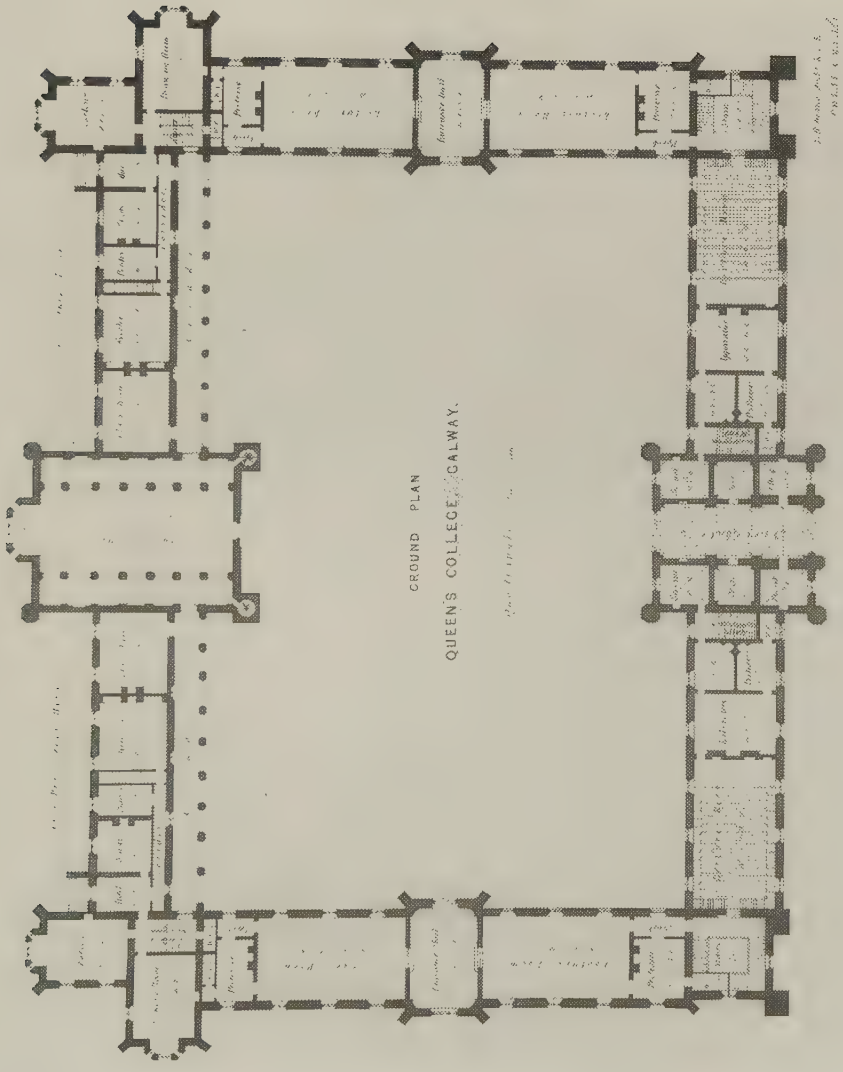



Fig. 1: 'Ground plan, Queen's College, Galway' (1847).

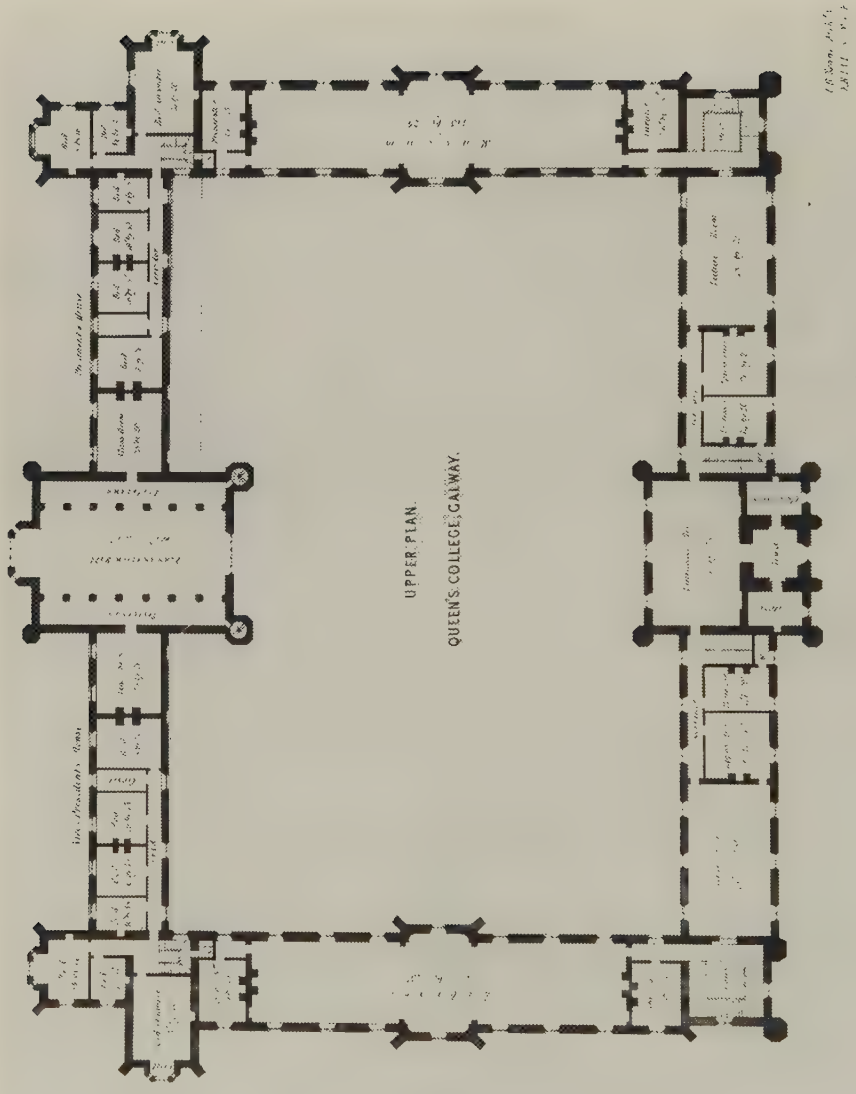



Fig. 2: 'Upper plan, Queen's College, Galway' (1847).

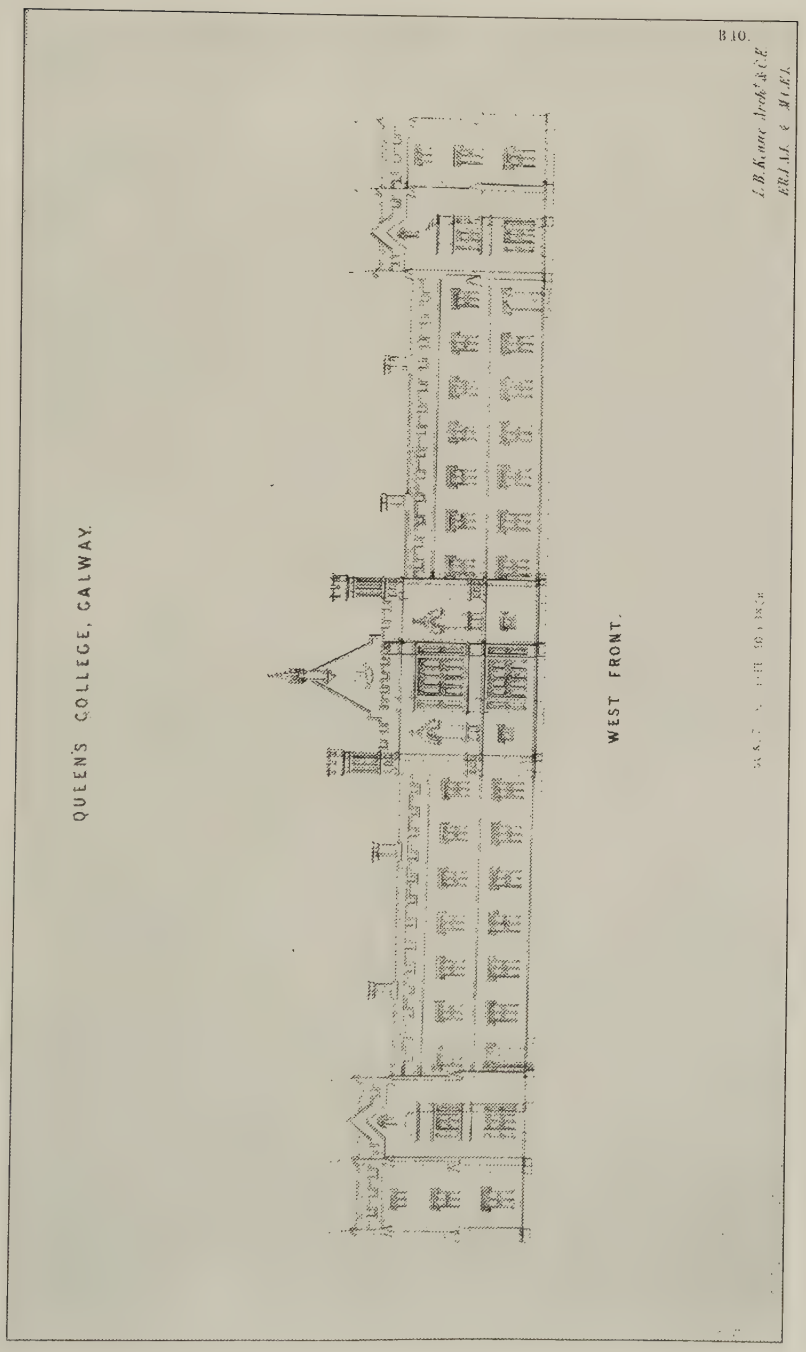



Fig. 3: 'West front, Queen's College, Galway' (1847).

*The Ecclesiologist*, journal of the Cambridge Camden Society (later, the Ecclesiological Society), which promoted interest in church architecture, largely from an Anglo-Catholic standpoint, commented on the plans of the three colleges in the course of a review of the *Report*.

> We next find the designs and plans of the three "Godless Colleges", all compendiously yclept "Queen's Colleges" – Belfast by Mr. Lanyon; Cork by Sir Thomas Deane; and Galway by Mr. Keane. It is a curious "fact" that all these structures have put on the garb of Christian architecture, and try to look like "Colleges" as of old the word was known; although by a curious sort of unconscious symbolism, the style in every case chosen is the most mundane of its sort, the Third-Pointed. We do not think much of any; but of the three, that at Cork is the best. The other two are positively bad. Of course no dormitories or chapel are to be found on the plan, though at Galway an examination hall – with aisles (called "triforium" on the plan!) and an end oriel – seems intended to pass muster in lieu: – a most apt type of the spirit of the institution.[16]

The modality opted for in the architecture of the college has been appraised as follows.

> J.B. Keane's design for Galway was a stylistic anachronism in that it seemingly ignored contemporary influences towards scholarly reproduction Gothic, such as the work of Pugin and the publications of the Cambridge Camden Society. Keane's elevations were derived from those of a number of country houses, such as Necarne and Magheramena, County Fermanagh, and Camlin, County Donegal, which he had designed in the 1830s. Like Lanyon's scheme, his was a symmetrical design, in this case with a central tower derived from Wren's Tom Tower at Christ Church, Oxford.[17]

* * *

The board of works – without further consultation – set about preparing the site at College Road which had particularly impressed its officials on the occasion of their preliminary visit in August. The *Mercury* recorded on 8 November that 'Surveyors are busily engaged for the last few days in measuring and surveying the ground for the site of the New College here. It is to be at the rere [*sic*] of the present College or School of Erasmus Smith's foundation and to extend across to Bohermore'.

However, a difficulty arose (as will be seen), concerning acquisition of the site, with the result that a further inspection of the locality was considered necessary. In consequence, the *Vindicator* recorded that the chairman of the board and the commissioner for buildings had arrived in Galway 'in order to select the most suitable site for the erection of our New College'. They invited the president to join them so as 'to have the benefit of his local knowledge'. He met them on the following day, 30 December, when 'they examined two or three sites at the west end of the town, and one at the east'. The paper concluded its

report with the remark 'The erection of the edifice will, we understand, commence early in the spring'.

* * *

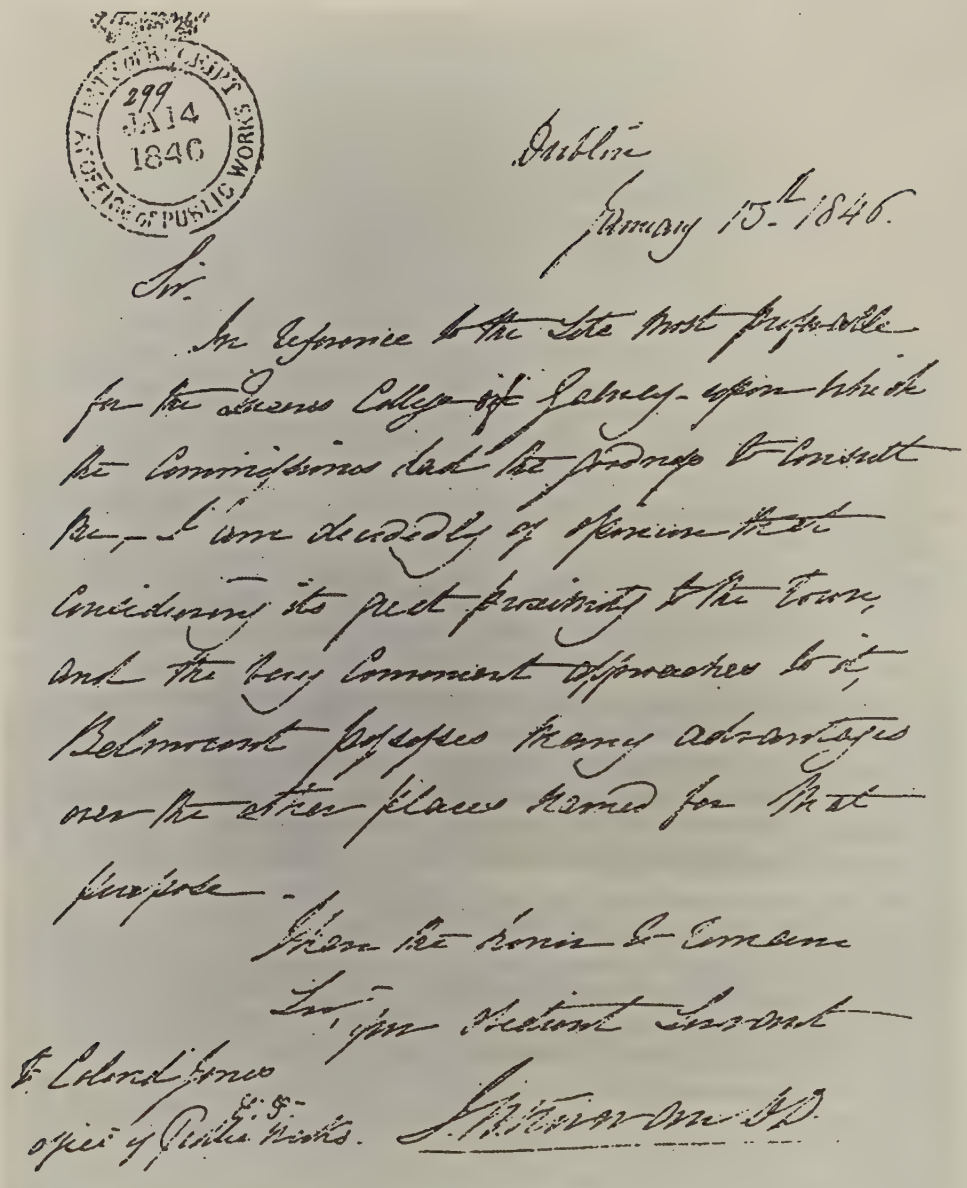
Until that date, the college did not have an official name: it had – as noted – gradually come to be referred to as one of the 'New Colleges'. That was because, as the preamble to the Colleges (Ireland) Act stated, the measure had been passed 'in case Her Majesty shall be pleased by Letters Patent under the Great Seal of *Ireland* to found one or more new Colleges for the Advancement of Learning in *Ireland*'. The requisite charters, under the form of letters patent, incorporating each of the three colleges and thus formally bringing them into existence, were issued on 30 December. The pertinent section from the relevant charter, which is housed in the archives, enjoined: 'that in or near the County of the Town of Galway in Our Province of Connaught in Ireland, there shall and may be erected and established one perpetual College for Students in Arts, Law, Physic, and other useful learning, which College shall be called by the name of Queen's College, Galway'.[18]

* * *

The final decision on the location of the college was left to the president; on 7 January 1846 the board wrote to him 'to request that you will favour them with your observations as to which site you consider the more suitable ... they are prepared to purchase as soon as they shall receive your reply'. In the course of his answer, dated 13 January, Kirwan informed the chairman, Colonel Jones: 'I am decidedly of opinion that considering its great proximity to the town, and the very convenient approaches to it, Belmount possesses many advantages over the other places named for that purpose'. His letter, which determined the location of the college, is here reproduced, in reduced format, in plate 1.[19]

There was, however, a particular difficulty in regard to Belmount (whose owner was John Whaley, of Dublin), as its extent of some eight statute acres in all was of itself insufficient for the purpose intended. As it happened, however, the fields which marched with the demesne on its eastern boundary, and which formed part of Knockanakarney, were unbuilt on. According to the *Vindicator* of 11 February, Kirwan was then engaged in discussion with their owner, Lachlan Maclachlan, in the hope of increasing the area of the site for the college. With the threat of famine imminent, the newspaper report concluded: 'The aid which the employment in the erection of the College will afford, in a period of trial and suffering, must be regarded as most providential in this locality'.

On 17 February the commissioners wrote, in part, as follows for the information of the lord lieutenant. 'The Commissioners have visited Galway,




Pl. 1: Letter from the president nominating the site for Queen's College, Galway; 13 January 1846.

Belfast and Cork, and have inspected the numerous pieces of ground tendered to them for sale, on which to erect the College at each of these places respectively, and the Board beg leave to report that, in Galway, they are treating for an eligible and desirable piece of ground, at a convenient distance from the town.'[20]

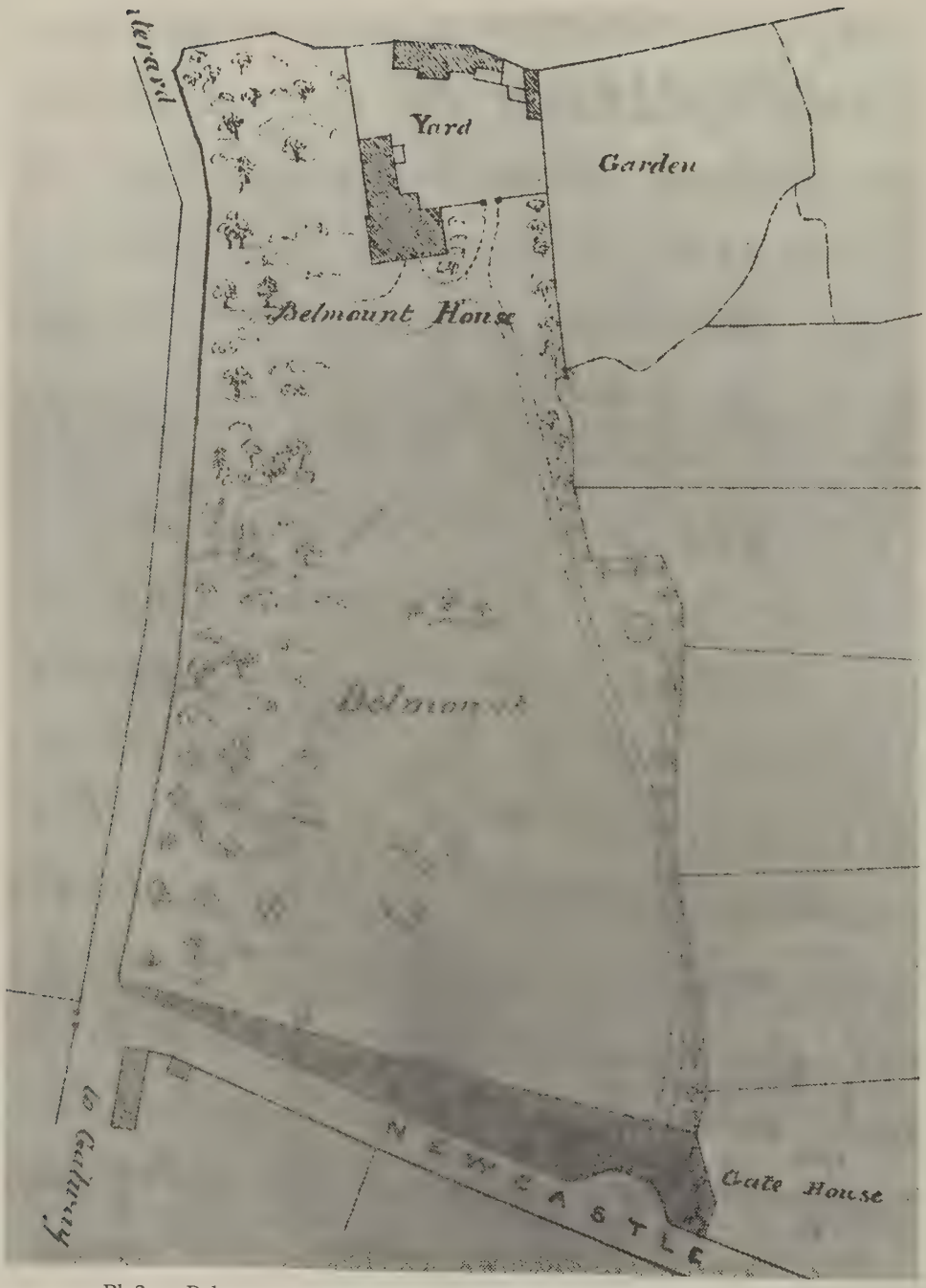
Obtaining the consent of all the parties involved (including tenants and annuitants), must have entailed considerable negotiation: the board had not been accorded power of compulsory acquisition. In the circumstances, substantial progress would appear to have been made; Whaley entered an agreement to sell on 21 May, as did Maclachlan on 7 July. One item of the title deeds (which are housed in the archives), is an assignment dated 10 November of that year, 1846; it contains a map of the site which is here reproduced in part and in reduced format (plate 2). In addition to the demesne of Belmount, it includes, to the east, a section of the fields acquired at Knockanakarney; 'Newcastle [Road]', to the south, subsequently came to be called University Road, the original name being restricted to the roadway on the west. According to the title-deeds, the total area of the site comprised 14 acres, 2 roods, 28 perches (statute measure; 6·7 hectares, approximately), and the total purchase price amounted to £3,469-9-0.[21]

* * *

The unavoidable delay in commencing the building of the college, occasioned by the requirement of first completing the necessary legal formalities, contributed to a growing sense of desperation among the unemployed craftsmen of the town. On 7 April a petition from 'the Trades and other Members of the Galway Mechanics Institute' was completed for presentation to the lord lieutenant; it included the following points.

> That Petitioners are now for a period of six months without employment, and during that time the operative members of this Institute have exhausted every resource in seeking to support themselves and families at the present unprecedented prices of Provisions in the Galway Market. That they have hitherto submitted in patience to the miseries of their lot, in the hope that the Public Works designed for Galway, viz., Colledge [*sic*], Claddagh Quay and Barracks, would be carried on in our Town and afford general employment to a Body of Operatives amounting to thirteen Hundred. That Petitioners look with anxious feelings for the erection of the above mentioned works.[22]

Efforts were in fact being made to have preparatory work completed so that construction of the college could be commenced as soon as possible. On 26 May, according to the *Vindicator*, the president, with the architect, visited Belmount 'to inspect and arrange preliminaries as to the position of the buildings on the magnificent site selected'. The *Mercury*, in taking up the account, raised unfounded hope by reporting 'We learn that it is the intention to commence the works in about a month from this date, when the ceremony of laying the first




Pl. 2: Belmount, with part of Knockanakarney (10 November 1846).

stone will be performed by the Marquis of Clanricarde'. That assertion was, of course, unrealistic: tenders for the contract had not as yet been sought. A month later, on 24 June, the *Vindicator* carried an anxious plea under the heading 'Public Works': 'While men are talking of drainages, while we are preparing for a bridge over Lough Athalia, and while a London conveyancer is getting over the slow length of a deed conveying the College lands, the people may pine and starve and die. Work, work, and immediate work is what we want'.

Finally, on 12 August, the *Vindicator* carried the eagerly awaited (if misleadingly expressed) report: 'The period for commencing the erection of the new Queen's College for Galway, we are happy to announce, is now definitely fixed. In our advertising columns will be found the notice for contractors'. The invitation to tender, as follows, was dated 7 August, at Dublin.

> The Commissioners of Public Works will Receive Tenders for the Erection of the proposed New College at Galway, on or before Tuesday, the 1st September 1846. The plans and specifications may be seen during the hours from 12 until 4 at the Office of the Commissioners, Custom House. The Board will be prepared on the 14th inst. to appoint a measurer to meet one to be selected by persons desirous of offering proposals for the work, to measure the plans, and ascertain the quantities of each description of work.

On the following day, 13 August, James Cusack, who described himself as an architect and builder residing in Galway, forwarded a memorial for submission to the lord lieutenant. It set forth that the necessity of inspecting the relevant documents at the board's office in Dublin constituted 'a most unhappy inconvenience to the contractors of this place', and requested that copies 'be forwarded to the Custom House of Galway that all qualified persons may have a fair chance'. He was informed, however, that 'His Excellency cannot interfere with the arrangements made by the Board of Works in this matter'.[23]

The *Vindicator* carried a brief announcement on 26 September: 'A report was abroad that a Mr. MacKay's tender was for £25,000, while those of Mr. Brady, Mr. Semple, and Mr. O'Brien of Loughrea, varied from £29,000 to £32,000'.

On 9 October the secretary of the board wrote to William Brady, informing him that his tender had been accepted. Brady, who lived at Nuns' Island, in Galway, practised as both architect and builder.[24] His commissions had included the parish church of St Nicholas, the College House (a residence for the secular clergy), and the residence for the clergy of the Order of St Augustine; outside the town they had included the churches at Bushypark and Barna, and the church and courthouse at Oughterard.[25] His contract, which was stipulated to extend to 1 September 1848, included a clause concerning the mode of payment by the board. 'The sum of Eighty Pounds per cent on the amount of Building and Work as they shall proceed, to be ascertained from time to time by the Architect of the said Commissioners, provided always that no payment shall be demanded or required to be made for a less sum than Two Thousand Pounds, and the balance

of said sum of £23,576, within Three Months after the said College and the Several Works connected therewith shall have been fully completed and furnished to the satisfaction of said Architect and so certified by him.'[26] Two sureties were required to be nominated by Brady; they were Anthony O'Flaherty, a landowner, of Knockbane, Moycullen, and Sir Colman Michael O'Loghlen, a barrister, of Merrion Square, Dublin.

On 16 October, in response to a query from the office of the lord lieutenant – prompted by a joint request from the presidents at Belfast and Galway on 29 September that construction of their respective colleges should soon be undertaken – the secretary of the board replied, in part, as follows. 'I am directed by the Commissioners to acquaint you that Galway College is contracted for, and the Board hopes that labourers are by this at work on the foundations.'[27]

In fact, the work was about to commence. According to the *Vindicator* of 17 October, the president had taken possession of the site on the previous day and preparation of the foundations was due to begin in two days' time. 'It is, we need not say', concluded the report, 'a most fortunate circumstance for hundreds of our starving people.'

* * *

The ceremony of turning the first sod on the site was performed by the president on Monday, 19 October, at two o'clock in the afternoon; the *Vindicator*, in reporting the event, stated that 'between thirty or forty men' were at work on the project. Two weeks later the paper reported that 'the College is now in a fair and rapid way of proceeding. Mr. Keane, the architect, has been here for several days ... Mr. Brady, the contractor, has extensive sheds being constructed so that the stonecutters and masons will be engaged throughout the Winter'. In mid-November the *Mercury* noted that Brady had 'over one hundred and thirty men engaged in sinking the foundations, and at the quarry'.

Just a month later, on 15 December, he entered into a further contract with the board of works. This was for the construction of an extension to the pier at the Claddagh, at a cost of £3,650.[28]

Difficulties began to arise at the beginning of the following year, 1847. On 22 January the commissioners wrote to Brady as follows. 'It having come to the knowledge of the Board that you have fixed your residence in the house situated upon the property purchased for the College, besides making use for your own purposes of other portions of the land ... vacate the premises and at the same time abstain from any further interference with the land.'

By the spring, the contractor was beginning to experience financial problems. On 1 May the secretary to the commissioners wrote to him as follows.

> I have to acknowledge the receipt of your communication of the 30th ult. requesting an instalment on account of the work performed by you at Galway

College, and in reply am directed to express the Board's regret that the terms of the contract will not admit of their making advances on materials delivered but not worked up in the Buildings. To enable them to comply with your application, they suggest that the consent of the sureties should be obtained for their doing so. If you cannot obtain this consent, no advance can be made; at the same time, the Board would observe that it is not probable that any Surety would refuse his consent to such an arrangement which would be for his advantage as it would in some degree diminish the risk of failure of the contractor by ensuing to him a more rapid repayment of his capital, thereby enabling him to complete his undertaking on favourable terms.

Simultaneously, Brady was finding difficulty in securing the services of skilled workers. On 26 May a letter from him was published in the *Vindicator* drawing attention to his recent advertisements in the local papers seeking such persons and pointing out that covered working areas had been provided so that bad weather would not lead to loss of wages on their part. 'In addition', he concluded, 'I beg to state that, in consequence of the depressed and afflicting state of the times, I am induced – though at considerable loss to myself personally – to advance the wages from 18s. to £1 per week, to competent working masons and stone-cutters, from Friday, 28th inst. to 1st November next.'

His inability to attract craftsmen in sufficient numbers contributed presumably to a communication being sent to him on 21 June. This stated that the board 'have received a Memorial from the Tradesmen of Galway complaining of the slow progress of the works of Galway College and Claddagh Pier, for which you are the contractor'.

In the meantime, his attempts to induce his two sureties to agree to amend the conditions of his contract had evoked quite dissimilar responses. In the course of a letter (written apparently in mid-June), he had replied to the board on the matter.

> It being now intimated to me that the opinion of your Law Adviser is averse to me on that point, but with the assent of my securities money would be granted by the Board for all works done, and in progress, and for materials delivered on the College premises, with this information I have applied to my securities for their assent. Sir C. O'Loghlen has in the kindest manner signed his assent, but the other, Mr. Anthony O'Flaherty, of Knockbane, has, in the most peremptory manner, refused his – under, I must suppose – the influence of his excited feelings towards me for the part I took at the late Galway election in giving Mr. Monahan, the Government candidate, my entire support.[24] Under these pressing circumstances I am compelled very respectfully to submit to the Board in the hope they will kindly consider my case and allow me to replace Mr. O'Flaherty by another Gentleman of equal respectability and property, Mr. Burke, of Danesfield.

Francis Burke was a member of the family of that name whose residence was near Moycullen. He carried on business as a corn merchant in Dublin and lived

at Templeogue. Letters to him from the board were sent to 34 College Green, which was the address of George Burke, notary public and stock broker.[30]

The commissioners accepted the proposed substitution; in a memorandum dated 28 June they informed their solicitor that they were induced to do so because, 'as the conditions of the contract in this case are more stringent than usual, they are anxious to afford all the assistance in their power to the contractor'.

The new arrangement was not, however, in place by the time the chairman of the board called to inspect the work, early in the following month. While recording that he 'expressed himself much pleased with the progress made by the contractor', the *Vindicator* continued as follows in its issue of 7 July. 'He also passed a very high compliment upon the manner in which all the Stone Work was cut and executed by the tradesmen of Galway, which reflected much credit upon them, but regretted the abundant quantity of it on hands was not engaged in the works – which would enable Mr. Brady to an advance of money from the Board of Works, the outlay up to the present moment being from the private treasury of the contractor.' 'Treasury' would appear, in the circumstances, to have been an apt term: Brady informed the paper that, between work on the college and the pier, 'I have upwards of 400 operatives and labourers daily employed'.

He was, however, being criticised in his capacity of employer, and endeavoured to refute the charge in a letter published in the *Mercury* on 10 July.

> I trust you will give insertion to the following simple facts as explanatory of my alleged conduct towards the masons of Galway. When I obtained the contract for the Queen's College, I felt I could allow but a certain fair rate of wages to the operatives whom I was to employ, which, however, did not meet the expectation of the masons, who, it seems, were in the enjoyment of more remunerative employment under the Board of Works. Excepting a certain proportion of the townsmen, who valued the continuance and convenience of the College employment, I was necessitated to invite strangers in, as I could not obtain a requisite number of competent hands here. When, however, the public works ceased, as many of the masons of the town as applied to me, I have taken on the works, notwithstanding that the conduct of some was calculated to give me annoyance.

On 28 August George Edmond Burke, a landowner, of Danesfield, assigned his life assurance policy, which was for the sum of two thousand pounds, to the secretary of the board. He obviously did so at the instance of Francis Burke, presumably because his relative was experiencing difficulty in fulfilling his obligations as a guarantor for the contractor.[31]

The commissioners also were experiencing a cause for frustration – in their case, with the architect. They expressed their feelings in a forthright letter to Keane on 11 November. 'It is with regret the Board find themselves called on to state to you that if you cannot forward the working drawings required for

Galway College, and which should have been supplied when the contract was signed, they must employ some other person to prepare them. The Board has experienced no such delay in obtaining the ordinary drawings now sought for, from any other architect that has been employed by them.'[32]

The transmission of those essential drawings to the contractor may have been a reason for Keane's visiting the site shortly after. The *Vindicator* noted, on 24 November, 'Mr. Keane, the architect, has been here some days from Dublin, inspecting the work, which is in rapid progress of advancement – and which, now that we can judge of its magnitude and beautiful style of architecture, promises to be a splendid pile'.

That enthusiastic view of the progress of the building was not shared by the board. On 16 December it informed Keane, who had applied for a payment of his commission, that 'the Board can make no further advances in the present state of the works'; on 24 January 1848 it informed Brady, who had requested an interim settlement, that 'there is not work done to entitle you to the instalment sought for'.

During the following month the commissioners sent their assistant surveyor, Frederick V. Clarendon, to inspect 'the state of the works of Galway College'. His report proved so alarming that they dispatched extracts from it to Keane on 2 March. One such extract reads as follows. 'No attention has been paid to the protection of the walls from the injurious effects of the weather during the entire winter and, as the walls have been left uncovered, they have suffered very materially from being saturated with rain, which, together with the frosts to which they have been subjected, have caused the greater portion of the brick lining to burst and sprawl away, to the manifest deterioration of the building.' The accompanying letter from the secretary concluded: 'I am also instructed further to express the Board's surprise that you should have allowed works under your direction to have been left in such an exposed state during the winter, as that represented in the foregoing extracts. It is useless for the Board to employ an architect to superintend and direct works if contractors are not given [instructions] on each visit of the architect'.

The commissioners wrote also to their clerk of works on the site 'to express to you the Board's strong displeasure at what can only be considered great neglect on your part, as well as that of the architect, in allowing such unworkmanlike proceedings to go on without your interference or calling the Board's attention to the subject'. 'The Board must impress on you', the letter concluded, 'the necessity for using more exertions in seeing that the contractor's duties are more regularly performed, both in the execution of the work, choice of materials, and protection of the work when executed.'

The efforts of the commissioners to have the work protected – however belatedly – against the elements, apparently had some effect. An account in the *Vindicator* on 8 April stated: 'Three sides of the very capacious square will, we

were assured, be roofed before the end of July next, and we calculate upon the completion of this ponderous structure early in March, 1849'.

The common opening date set for each of the three colleges was the month of October, 1849. By the beginning of that year, the growing dissatisfaction of the board with the performance of their architect and contractor at Galway, combined with the pressing need both to have the building completed in time and to keep within the limits of the budget allocated, meant that the strain on all parties involved – including the guarantors – increased.

The stringency felt by the commissioners is apparent in a letter sent to Keane on 2 January by their secretary. 'I am to request that you will make out for the Board a correct list of all sums to be deducted from the amount of the contract for Galway College, in consequence of the several alterations decided to be made with a view to the reduction of the expenditure ... the Board finds the funds remaining scarcely equal to complete the buildings and fittings, without leaving any fund for the lodges and ground.'

* * *

Some of the 'alterations' may be noted by examining two of the seven contract drawings – signed by Keane and countersigned by Brady – which are housed in the archives and are here reproduced, in part and in reduced format, as figures 4 and 5. In addition to the statues – which, as is evident from the original drawing, were to represent Queen Victoria and Prince Albert – other features, including plaques and finials, were omitted. An unsigned and undated design drawing, similarly housed, entitled 'longitudinal section through Examination Hall', depicts an oriel window over its main entrance, for which – at the particular instance of the board – a simpler, perpendicular (*i.e.*, Gothic-type) window was substituted.[33]

* * *

Keane was again written to by the commissioners at the beginning of the following month, on 1 February 1849. Francis Burke was evidently experiencing financial strain: in fact (as will be seen), Brady – who must also have been in difficulty – was obliged to grant him power of attorney to receive personally payments due from them. 'I am directed by the Board', their secretary stated, 'to request that you will proceed to Galway with as little delay as possible and measure the work remaining to be done under the Contract for Galway College, subject to the deductions authorised by omission of works, so as to be able to report without delay the cost of completing the works by the Contractor, as Mr. Bourke [*sic*], on the part of Mr. Brady, complains that the payments made by the Board are not equal to the value of works executed.'

Keane was sent a further admonition from the board, as follows, on 22 March.

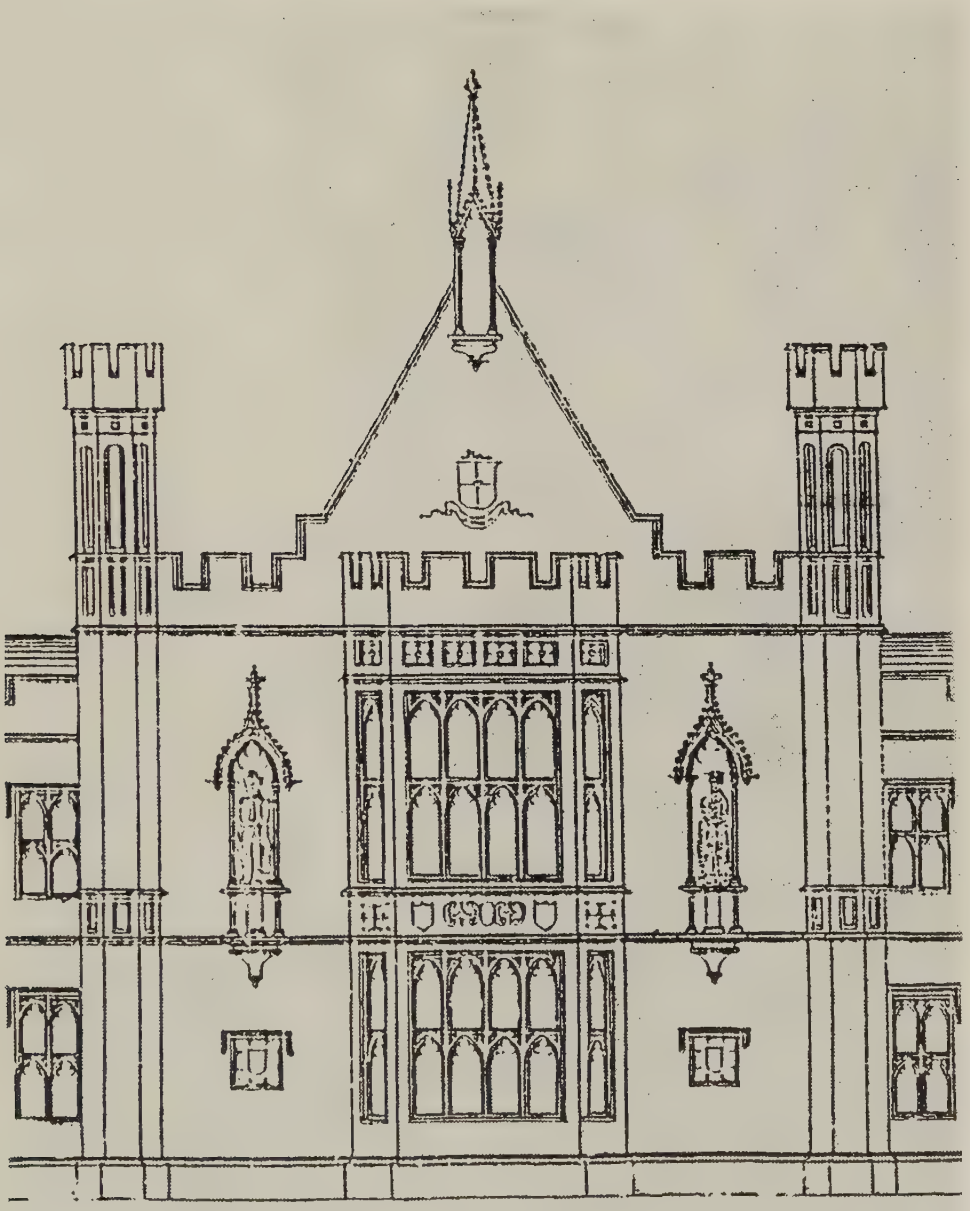


Fig. 4: 'Exterior west elevation, Queen's College, Galway' (part of contract drawing; 1846).

Fig. 5: 'Elevation east side of Quadrangle, Queen's College, Galway' (part of contract drawing; 1846).

> The Commissioners must remind you that you have been employed as Architect for this College, not merely to give a Design, but to watch carefully the execution of the Works – to see that the specification and conditions of the contract are faithfully carried out, and to suggest from time to time such alterations and amendments as may occur to you, and which, without injuring the Building, may tend to diminish the Cost. Hitherto, a great deal of this business has devolved on the Board and their Officers, and they must insist on more attention being paid by you. Your visits must be more frequent to Galway (you having only once visited it since last autumn), and it will be necessary that you should use every exertion to have the Works completed at the earliest period.

Brady, and Burke who was addressed as his 'agent', were each sent a warning on 18 May: 'no further advance will be made for the Works at Galway College until all the timber required is delivered on the premises and the Works much more actively carried out than at present'.

That a crisis was rapidly developing is clear from a letter sent by the board to both O'Loghlen and Francis Burke on 6 June.

> The Commissioners, having before them your letter of the 4th inst. and a communication from Mr. Brady dated the 2nd, by which it appears that both you and he are desirous of obviating the necessity which would render it incumbent on the Board to enter on the Works of Galway College and complete them, I am directed to acquaint you that the Commissioners will not, for the present, proceed to take the completion of the Works into their own hands, in the hope that you and Mr. Brady will give early and satisfactory evidence of your proceeding diligently with the Works and bringing same to completion.

An insight into the effect which the difficulties being encountered were having on Burke – as surety and attorney – emerges in the course of a personal letter which he wrote to the president on 4 July. 'As the contract is not likely to be so good a speculation as at first contemplated, I hope the disbursements may come through my hands, to make some amends for my outlay for so long a period as three years nearly, now passed in its service. I gave peremptory orders to Mr. Boardman, if the carpenters were not at work yesterday to employ them on receipt and that I would in that case send him the money to pay them, instead of Brady, who is the most incorrigible being I ever came across.'[34]

The situation continued, however, to deteriorate, as is clear from a letter to Burke from the commissioners, dated 18 July. 'The Board's chairman, who is now at Galway, has written from there to say that, from the slow manner in which the works at the College there are progressing, he is of opinion that it will be impossible that the building could be completed by October if more carpenters (competent workmen), are not employed. He complains also that bad timber and bad flooring-board [are] being used. I am to request your immediate attention to this or the Board will be obliged to take possession of the works.'

On 27 July, in the course of his brief visit to the town, Thomas Carlyle noted: ' "Godless College", turreted grey edifice, just becoming ready'.[35]

By that stage, in an attempt to hasten completion of the building, Burke was personally ordering materials, including slates and York paving flags, at his own charge. On 1 August he assured the board that 'after this week, one hundred sashes shall be forwarded weekly'. Two days later he applied for an instalment on behalf of work performed by the contractor. He was sent a reply to each communication on 13 August. In regard to the request for an interim payment, he was informed: 'the Architect reports he cannot certify for a further advance until more work is done and a further inspection made by him'. His expectation concerning the supply of material was also misplaced: 'I am to acquaint you that the Board have received a report from their Clerk of Works at the Building that, on the 11th inst., only 21 sashes had been delivered, and to state that it is impossible that the Building can be completed in proper time at this rate of delivery'.

Time was indeed running out. On 22 August a four-page prospectus – the first official publication of Queen's College, Galway – was issued by the registrar, on the authority of the president, announcing the commencement of the matriculation examination on 30 October: effectively, the date of opening of the institution. The prospectus contains also the names of the members of the academic staff, details of scholarships, examination curricula and fees. Its first page is reproduced, in reduced format, in figure 6.[36]

Despite his efforts, Burke continued to experience difficulty in being reimbursed, as a communication sent by the board to Keane on 11 October shows. 'I am directed by the Commissioners of Public Works to return to you herewith the Certificate which has been received from you in favour of the Contractor for Galway College for £500 – and to observe that it is impossible to ascertain in what manner you make your calculation of materials delivered and work done.'

Eleven days later, on 22 October, while in Galway, Burke took his own life.[37]

Brady wrote to the commissioners on 24 October. 'I beg leave respectfully to solicit from the Board of Public Works an Instalment of Three Hundred and Fifty Pounds stg. for account of the Queen's College now the same is completed, to enable me to pay off my weekly expenses for said works. Mr. Francis Burke to whom I had given a Power of Attorney to draw these Instalments for me hitherto, I regret to say, died suddenly here on Monday last. Of course, there is thereby an end to that power. Tis not my intention to renew it for the present to any other person as I will resume them myself for the future.'[38]

Queen's College, Galway, was officially opened, as arranged, at midday, on Tuesday, 30 October, 1849.[39]

* * *

# Queen's College, Galway.

The Matriculation Examination will be held on Tuesday and Wednesday, the 30th and 31st of October, and the Scholarship Examination on Friday, Saturday, and Monday, the 2nd, 3rd, and 5th of November, 1849.

Supplemental Matriculation Examinations will be held on Tuesday, 13th November, 1849, and at the commencement of the Second Term of the Collegiate Session, viz. on Tuesday, 8th January, 1850.

The several departments of the College will open for public instruction, on Wednesday, the 7th of November, 1849.

*President*, . . VERY REV. J. W. KIRWAN, D.D.
*Vice-President*, . EDWARD BERWICK, A.B.

Faculty of Arts.

*The Greek Language*, . . WM. EDWARD HEARN, A.B.
*The Latin Language*, . . WILLIAM NESBITT, A.M.
*Mathematics*, . . . . MICHAEL ROBERTS, F.T.C.D.
*History and English Literature*, EDWARD BERWICK, A.B.
*Modern Languages*, . . A. BENSBACH, PH.D.
*Logic and Metaphysics*, . . THOS. W. MOFFETT, A.M., LL.B.
*Chemistry*, . . . . E. RONALDS, M.D.
*Natural Philosophy*, . . JOHN MULCAHY, A.B.
*Natural History*, . . . A. G. MELVILLE, M.D.
*Mineralogy and Geology*, . WILLIAM KING, F.G.S.
*The Celtic Languages*, . . CORNELIUS MAHONY, ESQ.

Faculty of Medicine.

*Anatomy and Physiology*, } CROKER KING, M.D., M.R.I.A.,
*Practical Anatomy*, . } F.R.C.S.I.
*Practice of Surgery*, . . JAMES V. BROWNE, M.D.
*Practice of Medicine*, . . N. COLAHAN, M.D.
*Materia Medica*, . . . SIMON M'COY, M.D.
*Midwifery*, . . . . RICHARD DOHERTY, M.D.

Faculty of Law.

*English Law*, . . . . . HUGH LAW, A.B.
*Jurisprudence and Political Economy*, DENIS C. HERON, A.B.

Schools of Civil Engineering and of Agriculture.

*Civil Engineering*, . . . . THOMAS DRANE, M.A.
*Agriculture*, . . . . . THOS. SHILLING, ESQ.

3

Fig. 6: Prospectus for Queen's College, Galway; 22 August 1849.

Despite Brady's assertion, work on the college was not – as the commissioners were aware – complete. In reporting its opening, the *Mercury* noted on 3 November that 'in consequence of the unfinished state of the work the public inauguration of the college has been deferred until the 8th of January, 1850, when, it is expected, the splendid Examination Hall will be finished'.

On the death of Francis Burke, his relative, George Edmund Burke, assumed his role as co-guarantor for Brady. He soon received a peremptory indication of the responsibility involved. Just over a week after the college had opened, on 8 November, the commissioners sent him, O'Loghlen, and Brady, notification of their intention 'to enter on the works of Galway College'.

The reason for that warning – and its consequence – were explained in the course of a letter sent to the vice-president on 17 November.

> I am directed by the Commissioners of Public Works to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 14th inst. transmitting a resolution of the Council of the Queen's College, Galway, representing urgently the inconvenience which is being experienced from the unfinished state of that building, as well as of the grounds and approaches thereto, and they regret very much the incomplete state of the works in question. Every exertion has been made on their part that the Building might be completed on time by the Contractor, but the unfortunate and melancholy circumstance connected with the late cessation of the contract works (when so little was required to be done), threw fresh difficulties in the way of procuring funds. The Board then considered it their duty to serve notice on the Contractor and his Securities of their intention to enter on the works and finish them under their own officers and by their own workmen – of which you and the president are aware. This course of proceedings is one that the Board are always anxious to avoid but in this case the result of serving the notice has had this good effect that an arrangement has been come to by the Contractor and his surviving Sureties by which funds for completing what remains to be done have been provided, and the number of men to be employed is to be regulated by the Board. The Commissioners have, therefore, every reason to hope that the few remaining works will be finished at an early period.

The confidence expressed by the commissioners in the operation of the new 'arrangement' – in which, apparently, O'Loghlen played the leading role – was to prove misplaced: Brady could not be relied on. The commissioners must have had at least an inkling of the situation since by that time, 17 November, he had already been in correspondence with them requesting 'to have Claddagh Pier taken off his hands'; that was agreed to, subject to a deduction and to the proviso of 'some works yet remaining to be completed'.[40]

On that date the commissioners also directed their assistant surveyor to 'proceed to Galway so as to be ready there on Monday morning to examine all the works going on at Galway College, and point out to the Contractor such alterations, if any, as may be necessary, in Work to which objection has been raised'. He was also enjoined to inform Brady, in writing, of 'the number of

tradesmen of different classes, and also of labourers, that should be employed in order to push on the Works vigorously to completion'.

The outcome of that official inspection was conveyed to the commissioners in a communication from their resident clerk of works; they in turn transmitted its contents, as follows, to O'Loghlen on 7 December. 'The Contractor for the College has dismissed several masons and carpenters employed on the Works. This reduction took place immediately on Mr. Clarendon's leaving Galway. It shows such a bad spirit on the part of the Contractor that the Board has instructed their Clerk of Works to act strictly on the terms of the agreement to which you are a party.'

The sense of frustration being experienced by the commissioners is conveyed in letters dispatched by them at that time. On 20 December they informed Brady that they 'have never before experienced so much trouble in getting work of an ordinary nature carried out, and there appears to be on your part a total disregard of the agreement entered into with the Board'.

The sense of frustration must have been acutely shared by the college authorities at that time, the beginning of 1850. The slow progress of the work of completion meant that the interior of the examination hall (later, the aula maxima), was not ready for the postponed formal inauguration of the college on 8 January, the date of commencement of the second term. The *Mercury* reported that the ceremony had again been deferred, until work within the hall should be finished.

Brady was not in a position to complete the work in accordance with the terms of the agreement entered into. On 25 January he wrote to the board asking to be allowed extra time on the grounds that 'it will take three weeks to complete the plastering of the Examination Hall'. The commissioners evidently considered that there was no remedy which they could adopt – other than attempt to point out his shortcomings to him. The secretary replied on the following day. 'I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 25th inst. and to remind you that your contract expired on the 1st September 1848 and that when entering into the agreement lately with the Board you stated verbally that the works would be completed by the beginning of January and you now state it will take three weeks to complete the plastering of the Examination Hall – of which the Board have no doubt at the present rate of proceeding, and which can be accounted for by the non-payment of your workmen.' The secretary was, evidently, so incensed that he dispatched a second letter to Brady on that day. 'I really am surprised', he continued, 'at your writing to ask any favour of the Board after the treatment they have experienced at your hands. We were induced to stay legal proceedings in consequence of your undertaking to complete the works forthwith, funds being provided through the assistance of Sir Colman O'Loghlen, who has fulfilled his part of the agreement, as he states that the large sum, estimated by you to be more than sufficient to complete, has

been advanced to you and, beyond all doubt, if expended, value has not been given for it. I can assure you that the Board will not grant any further indulgence – great discredit has been brought on the Establishment by the unbusinessslike manner in which the Works have of late been conducted and executed.'

Further embarrassment was to follow. On 21 March the secretary sent identical letters to O'Loghlen and Burke. 'I am directed to acquaint you that the Lord Lieutenant has received a memorial from certain carpenters, masons and other tradesmen, stating certain amounts to be due to each of them for work done at Galway College, and praying His Excellency's interference to procure payment from the Board. As the Contractor is bound by his contract to pay his labourers and others employed by him at least once in each month, the Board hereby call on you, as his surety, for the performance of this covenant of the contract.'

At length, in its issue of Wednesday, 19 June, the *Vindicator* recorded that 'The collegiate session for the present year was closed by the president at 2 p.m. on Monday last in the splendid Examination Hall'. 'There was', the report noted, 'a numerous and highly fashionable attendance'. The president was Edward Berwick; he had been appointed to the office in the previous January following the death of his predecessor. He commenced his address – later issued in pamphlet form at the request of the college council – with a tactful explanation of the prolonged deferment: 'by some of those unavoidable delays which occur in the erection of so vast an edifice as this, its inauguration was necessarily postponed'.[41]

In the course of a comment on the address, the editor of the *Vindicator* furnished an insight into the handicaps under which staff and students had been working – and had no hesitation in attributing the blame. 'From the very commencement of its existence, the Galway College laboured under peculiar disadvantages. When it first opened, last October, there was but one single room in the whole building fit for use, and this room for an entire term – indeed, we believe, much longer – served the purpose of examination hall, lecture-room, Council Chamber, and many other purposes. Even at this moment, the Board of Works continue to drag on their interminable operations, and no one can tell when they will finally give up their ill-managed and ill-finished work.'

* * *

In accordance with the penultimate clause of the act which had led to the establishing of the colleges, the president submitted his official report for the year, dated 25 July 1850, to the crown; it was then published as a house of commons paper.[42] It commenced by stating: 'The College was opened for Students on the 30th October, 1849, under circumstances of a very discouraging nature ... the unfinished state of the building, at the time of opening, led to a

very general belief that its proceedings would not commence until the succeeding year'. However, matters had since improved. 'With respect to a great part of the buildings, I am enabled to speak in terms of marked satisfaction. On the opening of the College, great inconvenience was felt from their backward condition; they are now, however, nearly completed. Several matters still remain in an unfinished state, which, I am informed by the Board of Works, will be attended to in the course of the autumn. The Examination Hall, and the Rooms allotted to the Library and Museum, are handsome and extensive. Ample accommodation has been provided for the Professors. The Lecture Rooms are lofty, spacious and capable of holding large audiences. The Laboratory has been fitted up in a very creditable manner. A dwelling-house, situate on the grounds, has been converted, at a small expense, into an excellent Anatomical School.'[43] Berwick then went on to refer, with disapprobation, to the location chosen for the institution. (It is of interest, in the context, to note that the *Vindicator*, of 10 June 1848, reporting that Berwick had, in the company of the then president, inspected the progress of the building three days previously, observed 'This was the first visit of the vice-president'.) 'The grounds about the College are, I am sorry to say, still in a very unfinished and discreditable state (indeed, the site selected for the College has been anything but fortunate); I trust, however, that, during the autumn, some further effort will be made to bring them into order and cultivation, and to remedy, in some degree, the natural disadvantages of the place.'

Two days later, on 27 July, Berwick wrote to the commissioners regarding the condition of the building. He was sent a succinct reply by their secretary on 1 August. 'I am directed by the Commissioners to state that it is unnecessary for them to enter into the causes of delay in finishing off the works of Galway College, as from your constant communication with the Board, and the information given you, you must be aware of the difficulties encountered with the Contractor before and since your appointment as President. The Board have [had] a report from their Clerk of Works within these few days, who states the building is now fit for occupation.'

On the same day, 1 August, the board arrived at an uncompromising decision concerning a plea which had been submitted by the contractor on 26 June. 'With respect to that part of Mr. Brady's letter requesting the Board would favourably consider his application to be allowed the amount of a clerical error, stated to have been made by him in the calculation prior to sending in his Tender: the Board cannot, without setting aside all the principles on which Contracts are founded, and without gross injustice to other parties who sent in Tenders for the same Work, entertain the application.'[44]

On 29 September Keane also was sent a rebuff. 'I am directed by the Commissioners of Public Works to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 23rd inst. on the subject of the balance claimed on account of your professional

services as Architect for Galway College, and have to state that the Board cannot make any further advances to you in the present unsettled state of the Contractor's accounts ... the Board feel bound to state that in dealing with your present application they are not prepared to admit that you have any legal claim, inasmuch as you have not latterly performed the duties for which fees are normally paid.' Keane's financial situation was by that time desperate: he was imprisoned for debt during the following month. His name was struck off the list of members of the Institute and his practice appears to have been taken over.[45]

* * *

The publication of the president's report, with its clear criticism of the board of works – particularly in regard to the site chosen for the college – impelled that body to submit a rebuttal, in the form of a memorandum, to the lord lieutenant. It was accompanied by a personal letter, dated 22 October 1850, signed by R.J. Griffith, the recently appointed chairman, which reads as follows.

> Mr. Berwick, the President of the Queen's College, Galway, in his Report to Her Majesty, dated 25th July last, and printed by order of Parliament, when alluding to the buildings erected under the direction of this Board, having considered it his duty to describe the site selected as "anything but fortunate" and having also stated therein that the grounds of the College were at the date of the Report left in a "discreditable" state, the accompanying statement of facts has been prepared for Your Excellency's information, which, I trust, will show that the terms used are really uncalled for.
>
> I apprehend that in Reports of this nature intended for the Public eye, it is not usual, and is certainly inconvenient, for one Public Department to animadvert on another, and certainly before such be done, the grounds should be undeniable.
>
> Perhaps, therefore, Your Excellency will call on Mr. Berwick to state what Public inconvenience he experiences or apprehends from the site, and whether under all the difficulties which have occurred and of which he must be aware, the present site of the Building is not the best that at the time could be procured and whether the Works as executed are not on the whole creditable.
>
> It is with much regret that I feel called on to address Your Excellency on this matter, but in justice to the Board and to Colonel Jones who is indignant at the charges implied against us, I could not let the Report pass without notice.
>
> Memorandum.
>
> The site for Galway College was selected after an inspection of all the Grounds close to Galway Town by Colonel Jones, Mr. Radcliff, and the late President, Dr. Kirwan, with the assistance of the Revd. Mr. D'Arcy and other people who took an interest in the affairs of the College. There was great difficulty in finding a site at all suitable in extent and nature of the ground for the purpose.
>
> One site, on the Dublin road, was at first selected but, it being the property of the Board of Erasmus Smith's Schools and enjoyed by the Master of the School for the time being, there were obstacles in the way of procuring it, no powers having been

given by the Colleges Acts [*sic*] to force sales. Another site favourable in extent and levels was offered on the west of the Town, but this was situated at a greater distance from it (in an exposed situation) than Dr. Kirwan considered it advisable to erect the College [on], as the students in bad weather could not arrive there on foot without being wet. This decision of Dr. Kirwan's the Board fully concurred in.

After this close examination of the District, an offer was made of the present site, and the adjoining Proprietor having agreed to sell some of his ground so as to make up the required quantity of land, this site was unanimously approved of and decided on accordingly, nor until lately has any decided opinion been expressed against it. It is on the high road from Galway to Outerarde, open on all sides and easily approached from all parts of the Town. The floor line of the Building is about 14 feet above the level of the River [*sic*] running at the bottom of the grounds (see Plan annexed).[46] From the Building, this part of the ground is approached by a flight of 8 steps formed in the terrace slope, in front of the main entrance. When the land was taken, the lower part of the ground near the River was flooded in winter, but the level of it has been raised by filling in;[47] besides which, when the Lough Corrib drainage works, now in progress, are completed, the river floods will be lowered.

With respect to the College being near the Work House, the Jail, and the Fever Hospital (an objection to the site understood to be put forward), it will be seen by the accompanying plan that the distance between the Jail and the College is 1080 feet, and between the Fever Hospital and the College is 820 feet, with a wide river intervening. The workhouse is to the rear of the College Buildings, separated therefrom by a high road and fields, and distant about 520 feet.[48] The general eligibility of the site was perhaps indeed to be inferred from the fact of its having been selected for other important public Buildings.

It is scarcely possible in selecting a site close to a Provincial Town in Ireland to find one removed from any kind of buildings but, under all the circumstances, the Board remain of opinion that the site of Galway College does not merit the description of "anything but fortunate" applied to it in the published Report made by the President to the Queen but, on the contrary, that it is a good site and conveniently circumstanced for the Public use of the Building.

With respect to that part of the President's Report describing the "discreditable" state of the grounds in July last, the Board has to remark that the filling in of the low grounds had only been completed a short time before and, of course, it could not possibly have a neat appearance at the date of the Report, the grass not having grown on portion of it but, with a little attention on the part of the College authorities, this and the remainder of the grounds, planted and open, may be in a short time brought into as perfect order as the grounds of any private demesne.

* * *

In concluding his report, the president had observed that the college was 'situated in a climate of unusual dampness'. He did not then enter into the matter in detail but, at a meeting of the council held on 27 November of that year, 1850, it was resolved that the registrar should write to the commissioners

to request their 'immediate attention' to the problem of inadequate weather-proofing.

The letter reads, in part, as follows.

> The Council wish again to call the particular attention of the Board to the dampness pervading nearly the whole of the College buildings. This arises in part from the original fault of having approved of the badly cast iron sashes of the windows; in wet weather the rain pours through them in streams, disfiguring the walls, penetrating through the floors and thus threatening to be continually of serious injury to the building. The Library Committee report to the Council that in consequence of the dampness, which fires cannot remove, many of the books have already been mouldered ... There are other parts of the building through which the rain is admitted and which will require an immediate inspection on the part of the office of the Board of Works in order to the adoption of the necessary repairs. It is the particular wish of the Council that the Board would be pleased to intimate these instructions in reference to the completion of the College works, as in case of their unwillingness, from want of funds or from any other cause, to take the steps necessary to do it, it is the intention of the College to apply to the Government for that purpose.

In the course of their reply, on 6 December, the commissioners accepted that dampness was a problem in the building, attributable in large measure to negligence on the part of Brady. 'With respect to the dampness of the walls, the Board can only say that time must be allowed for their drying out where they have, during the progress of the building, been much exposed to wet and, unfortunately, their exposure has been greater on the Library Side, where the Board had the greatest difficulty in making the Contractor protect the rooms from the weather by boarding up the windows.'

* * *

The *Calendar of Queen's College, Galway,* published in the following year, 1851, contains as its frontispiece an engraved vignette of the building, which is here reproduced, in enlarged format (plate 3).[49] Two books which appeared in 1852 also contain an illustration of its façade: *A week in the west of Ireland,* illustrated by William F. Wakeman[50], and *Memorandums made in Ireland,* by John Forbes.[51] Both employ the epithet 'handsome' in describing the building; that term, or a synonym, was used by most contemporaries who recorded their impressions of it.[52]

Two other works, also published in 1852, refer, in addition, to its neighbourhood. The account by Francis B. Head, in *A fortnight in Ireland,* reads as follows. 'Queen's College, just completed on the outside of the town, is one of the chastest and handsomest public edifices I have ever seen. It is a pity, however, that the lowness of its position prevents it from contributing as much as it ought to the general beauty of the town. In its vicinity is a large poor-house,

Pl. 3 'Queen's College Galway' (1851)

built eight years ago; and about 100 yards from it, on a elevated plot composed of emerald-green turf and beds of beautiful flowers, stands a school-house, resembling very much a modern villa; and yet, in their immediate neighbourhood are to be seen unroofed huts, miserable cabins, a confusion of tottering, crooked stone walls surrounding small enclosures, many of which are so full of rocks that they really resemble a rising crop of young tombstones, several, like children's second teeth, coming out all crooked.'[53] Harriet Martineau's account, in *Letters from Ireland*, is briefer. 'Here is the very handsome Queen's College ... the grey marble edifice stands up strangely amidst bare plots of ground and desolate fields, heaped up or strewed over with stones, and inlets of water, which glitter in the sun on every side.'[54]

An exception to such favourable comments was that of Napoléon Roussel who described his reaction in *Trois mois en Irlande*, published in Paris in the course of the following year, 1853. 'Le *Queen's college* de Galway, est un bâtiment carré construit en pierre grise d'un aspect un peu sombre. Je ne sais s'il faut en chercher la cause dans l'absence des élèves, entrés en vacances, mais ce lieu est emprient de tristesse... .'[55]

* * *

In the meantime, the building had not yet fully dried out. On 3 May of that year, 1853, in response to a house of commons inquiry which had been sent to each of three colleges, the registrar replied, in part, as follows. 'The President or Vice-President, have not, properly speaking, resided in the college since its opening, as their official residences are still uninhabitable owing to the very defective manner in which the building of the college has been executed.'[56]

In the course of 1854 both the president and vice-president commenced living there. On 25 February 1857 – again in reply to a house of commons inquiry – the latter, referring to the Easter recess of three years previously, stated: 'from that time to the present, nearly three years, I have continually resided within the College'.[57] When the commission appointed to inquire into the progress of the Queen's Colleges took evidence at Galway on 18 March 1857, the president was queried regarding occupancy of his official residence. 'I did not reside here until 1854', he stated. 'The residence was not habitable in consequence of the extreme dampness of the building, and I was obliged, at a very large expense, to provide a residence for myself and family near the College.'[58]

* * *

Closing the audit for the erection of the building proved protracted. On 13 January 1852 the secretary to the board of works wrote to O'Loghlen inviting him to meet the commissioners 'for the purpose of coming to an arrangement

respecting Galway College accounts'. According to a return signed by the accountant to the board and dated 2 March 1858, the total cost of constructing the college had amounted to £28,512-16-1.[59]

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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NOTES

1 *Hansard* 3, lxxvi, 1131,1132.
2 Slater's *National commercial directory of Ireland* (1846), p. 124; E. Keane, P.B. Phair, T.U. Sadlier, *King's Inns admission papers, 1607-1867* (1982), p. 356.
3 The minute books of the town commissioners are housed in the James Hardiman Library, National University of Ireland, Galway (NUI, Galway).
Andrew Henry Lynch represented the borough from 1832 to 1841; he was appointed master in chancery in 1838: *cf.* M. Stenton, *Who's who of British members of parliament*, I (1976), p. 247.
4 *Hansard* 3, lxxvii, 4; lxxx, 353, 354, 356, 357.
5 (*Freeman's Journal*, 13 May 1845); *Galway Mercury*, 17 May 1845.
6 *Galway Mercury*, 31 May 1845.
7 *Hansard* 3, lxxx, 1133, 1295.
8 *Ibid.*, 3, lxxxii, 370-3, *passim.*
9 Chief secretary's office, registered papers (CSORP), 1845, 011108; National Archives of Ireland.
10 Board of works: Queen's Colleges Letter Book (OPW 1/13/1/1). That volume, and the consecutive volume (OPW 1/13/1/2), constitute, unless otherwise specified, the sources of the material contained in this account.
11 BL, Add. MS 40476, ff 45lr-v; cited in T.W. Moody and J.C. Beckett, *Queen's, Belfast 1845-1949*, I (1959), p. 20(6).
12 Joseph William Kirwan was parish priest of Kilcummin (Oughterard); Edward Berwick was counsel to the board of works.
13 *Hansard* 3, lxxx, 110-11, *passim.*
14 F. O'Dwyer, 'The foundation and early years of the RIAI', in J. Graby (ed.), *150 years of architecture in Ireland* (1989), pp 9, 13. For a list of Keane's commissioned work *cf.* M. Bence-Jones, *A guide to Irish country houses* (1988), p. 312; J. Williams, *A companion guide to architecture in Ireland, 1837-1921* (1994), p. 412.
15 *Sixteenth annual report from the board of public works in Ireland* (1847-8), appendix B, figs 10, 11, 12.
16 'Irish colleges and lunatic asylums', *Ecclesiologist*, lxxi (April 1849), 290. *Cf.* R. Sturgis, *A dictionary of architecture and building* (1902), *svv*: 'Tiers Point. In French, the point where the two determining arcs of a pointed arch meet, the apex'; 'Triforium. In mediaeval church architecture, the space between the vaulting and the roof of an aisle, when opened into the nave over the nave arches and under the clerestory windows by an arch, or two arches, in each bay, or, more characteristically, by three arches (hence the name), the whole forming a gallery'.
17 F. O'Dwyer, *The architecture of Deane and Woodward* (1997), p. 61. For illustrations of the three houses cited, *cf.* M. Bence-Jones, *op.cit.*, pp 71, 198, 55.
18 The term 'the archives', as used in this account, refers to those of NUI, Galway.
A transcript and exposition of the charter, by S. Mac Mathúna, together with a reproduction in colour in reduced format, have been published in J.M.M. Hermans & M. Nelissen (eds), *Charters of foundation and early documents of the universities of the Coimbra Group* (1994), pp 68-9, 91-2.
19 The letter bears the receipt stamp, dated 'JA 14 1846', of the office of public works; as it is

housed in the archives it was presumably returned to its writer for record purposes. It was written in Dublin where the presidents and vice-presidents were meeting: *cf Galway Vindicator*, 14 January 1846.

The spelling of the name of the demesne varied; *e.g.*, in two agreements, each dated 6 July 1846, it is rendered respectively as 'Belmont' and 'Belmount', while in a brief dated 11 November of that year it appears as 'Bellmount'.

20 CSORP 1846 03144. It is unclear whether the date of the communication is 7 or 17 February; however, as there are three annotations on its margin, each dated 19 February – including a directive, 'Transmit to His Excellency' – it would appear that 17 February is the correct date.

21 The *General valuation of Ireland: county of Galway* (1855), p. 57, records the area as containing 14 acres, 1 rood, 37 perches; the *Report of her majesty's commissioners appointed to inquire into the progress and condition of the Queen's Colleges at Belfast, Cork and Galway* (1858), (*Report comm. Q.C. 1858*), appendix, p. 377, xv quotes the area as comprising 14 acres, and the purchase price as £3,556-13-1.

22 Distress papers, 1846, D 279; National Archives. The Galway Mechanics Institute was founded in 1826; its earliest extant minute book dates from 1863: *cf.* the present writer's 'Father Peter Daly', this *Journal*, 39 (1983-1984), 100 (4).

Work on the Claddagh pier shortly commenced, as noted, below (28); although, according to the *Galway Vindicator* of 8 April 1846, surveying had already begun in preparation for the construction of a barracks at Renmore, the building was not erected until 1880.

23 CSORP 1846, 013432.

24 *Cf.* Pigot and Co., *City of Dublin and Hibernian provincial directory* (1824), p. 206; Slater's *National commercial directory, loc. cit.*

25 *Cf. Connaught Journal*, 14 March 1825, 24 January 1828; *Galway Vindicator*, 31 December 1840; P.A. Doyle, 'Some Irish Augustinians', *Good Counsel*, June 1939, 835; P. Daly, *Statement of accounts* (*c.* 1842), pp 10, 18, 24: *cf.* the present writer's *art. cit.*, 44 (1).

26 Board of works: Register of Contracts, f. 52 (OPW 2/1/65/2).

27 CSORP 1846, 018256.

28 Board of works: Register of Contracts, f. 121.

29 The *Galway Mercury* of 23 January 1847 carried an open letter from Sir Valentine Blake, MP, announcing his intention to resign; he died one week later. At the resulting by-election held on 17 February following, O'Flaherty, a repeal candidate, lost by a margin of five votes: B.M. Walker (ed.), *Parliamentary election results in Ireland, 1801-1922* (1978), p. 75.

30 *Cf. Dublin almanack* (1849), pp 470, 897.

31 The assignment is housed in the archives. G.E. Burke was father of Elizabeth, countess of Fingall; he is referred to in her memoirs, *Seventy years young* (1937; new ed. 1991).

32 Two working drawings, of the ground and upper floors, are housed in the archives; they are unsigned and undated and appear to be distinct from those bearing Keane's signature.

33. *Cf.* W. Garner, *Galway architectural heritage* [*c.* 1985], p. 56, in reference to 'University College, Galway'. 'The main block is of two storeys, built of limestone ashlar with an open quadrangle in the centre. The facade has mullioned windows with drip labels and a parapet of crenellations flanked at either end by bays which are flanked by octagonanal [*sic*] turrets. These turrets have pots and terminate the facade somewhat weakly. However, the centre-piece has crenellated octagonal turrets and pinnacles flanking a wide, pointed window and an adaptation of Tom Tower at Chirstchurch College [*sic*] Oxford. The ogee-headed archway beneath the tower leads into the quadrangle which is similarly finished to the facade, though without the crenellations and without the extra pinnacles flanking the centre-piece behind the tower.'

34 Royal Irish Academy, MS 12 N 20, no. 25. The 'Mr. Boardman' referred to has not been identified.

35 T. Carlyle, *Reminiscences of my Irish journey in 1849* (1882), p. 190.

36 The copy of the prospectus here reproduced has been deposited in the archives.

37 *Galway Vindicator*, 24 October 1849; *Cork Examiner*, 24, 29 October 1849; *Galway Mercury*, 27 October 1849.

38 Brady's letter is attached to the text of his contract, as noted, above (26). The grant of power of attorney referred to is not recorded in the registry of deeds.

39 *Galway Vindicator*, 31 October 1849.

40 Board of works: Letter Book, ff 91, 99 (OPW 1/8/2/1).

41 E. Berwick, *Address delivered by the president of Queen's College, Galway, at the close of the session 1849-50* (1850), p. 7.
42 H.C. 1850 [1272], xxv. 779-82.
43 The residence in question was Belmount House.
44 Board of works: Minute Book, f. 367 (OPW 1/1/15).
45 F. O'Dwyer, *art. cit.*, pp 13, 120 (30); 'The architecture of the board of public works 1831-1923' in C. O'Connor, J. O'Regan, *Public works* [1987], p. 15.
46 No copy of the plan accompanies the transcript. The 'River' is the Eglinton canal.
47 The filling, which also went to form the terrace fronting the college building, came from the spoil excavated for the canal: board to S.U. Roberts, district engineer, Galway, 22, 31 December 1849.
48 The sites of workhouse, jail and fever hospital are now occupied respectively by University College Hospital, cathedral and premises in the ownership of NUI, Galway.
49 This vignette would appear to have been used as an emblem by the college authorities because it appears as the heading on a letter (undated) written by Berwick to the office of the chief secretary concerning his recent appointment as president. (CSO, official papers (miscellaneous, assorted), 1832-82, 10/7.)
50 *Op.cit.*, p. 6.
51 *Op.cit.*, I, p. 215.
52 *Cf.* J. Caird, *The plantation scheme* (1850), p. 58; S.G. Osborne, *Gleanings in the west of Ireland* (1850), p. 60; [J.H. Ashworth], *The Saxon in Ireland* (1851), p. 20; J.D. Smith, *Connemara, past and present* (1853), p. 22; A. Marmion, *Maritime ports of Ireland* (1855), p. 466; W.M. Hind, 'Gleanings in west Galway', *Phytologist* 2 (1857), 513.
53 *Op.cit.*, pp 217-8. (The site of the school-house referred to is at present occupied by premises in the ownership of the Western Health Board.)
54 *Op.cit.*, p. 87. The author's account includes details of the work of Thomas Skilling, the professor of agriculture, at Ardfry: *cf.* J. Caird, *op.cit.*, pp 56-7. In the course of his application 'for the Professor's chair of Agriculture in the Queen's College, Galway', dated 26 December 1848, Skilling described himself as 'principal and manager of an extensive and promising School of Agriculture for all classes at Ardfry in the immediate vicinity of the Galway College where correct cultivation is practically carried out on an extensive scale' (CSORP 1848, 012016). A report on the Ardfry project, signed by Skilling and dated 8 December 1851, was published in *Transactions of the central relief committee of the Society of Friends during the famine in Ireland in 1846 and 1847* (1852), pp 426-7.

During her stay in Galway, Martineau was guest of Edmund Ronalds, the professor of chemistry: *Galway Packet*, 1 September 1852.
55 *Op.cit.*, p. 106.
56 *Returns of number of days since opening of Queen's Colleges that presidents, vice-presidents, were in residence.* H.C. 1852-3 (515), xciv. 520.
57 *Return of name, date of appointment and salaries of presidents, vice-presidents of Queen's Colleges.* H.C. 1857 (129), xv. 410.
58 *Report comm. Q.C. 1858*, p. 241.
59 *Ibid.*, app., p. 377, xv.

# DODOS AND DISCORD: A BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE ON A.G. MELVILLE OF QUEEN'S COLLEGE GALWAY

TIMOTHY COLLINS

Although the inaugural meeting of the Galway Archaeological and Historical Society took place on 23rd July 1900, it was more than a spontaneous gathering of like-minded individuals. According to the Society's *Minute Book*, this inaugural meeting was preceded by an earlier meeting which had been held in the Railway Hotel (now known as the Great Southern Hotel) on 21st March 1900. It was at this meeting that the decision to found a society was made. In the context of the times, it is obvious that there had been a growing groundswell of support for such a society in the region. This was in part due to the growing numbers of antiquarians and naturalists who were visiting Galway and, after the opening of the Galway-Clifden railway line in 1895, Connemara and the offshore islands. These antiquarians and naturalists arrived singly and in organised groups numbering anything up to a hundred or more people in the summer months. Collins (1993) has given details of these visitors, who were drawn to an area of such supreme archaeological and historical interest as the west of Ireland, and of their published work, which was to prove inspirational to others with similar interests.

Another important factor in providing the right background for the setting up of the Galway Archaeological and Historical Society was Queen's College Galway where, from its opening in 1849, there existed a body of professionally qualified academics who were willing to give public lectures in the winter months to foster interest in all kinds of subjects. It is this writer's contention that the origins of the Galway Archaeological and Historical Society are to be found in these public lectures, which were so well attended. From this perspective it can been be further seen that the Galway Archaeological and Historical Society was, from its foundation, closely linked to Queen's College Galway, a link that has been maintained throughout the Society's 98-year existence.

One person who stands out in this context is Alexander Gordon Melville, Professor of Natural History in Queen's College Galway from 1849 to 1882 who, by the public lectures and outings given in his spare time in the 1850s and 1860s, anticipated the kind of activities which the Galway Archaeological and Historical Society is now noted for.

When Queen's College Galway opened its gates to the first intake of 68

students on the morning of Tuesday 30th October 1849, the Dept of Natural History offered two overlapping courses, in Medicine and the Arts. Looking back at the syllabus and examination papers of this period, the subject appears quaint and unscientific, with a reliance on a classical education and a rather simplistic view of the diversity of animal and plant life. Much of this kind of study was based on the anatomical and morphological differences which could be seen between species. Professional naturalists saw themselves as collectors and cataloguers of the flora and fauna of the world. Frequently, though, naturalists came to absurd conclusions when viewing specimens of hitherto unknown species for the first time.[1]

It must be taken into account that the publication of Darwin's *On the origin of species* was still ten years away, in 1859, so there were many schools of thought regarding the origins of the great biodiversity of life which existed in great profusion on land and sea. Some people were developing theories of evolution and extinction based on the comparative anatomy of living and fossil animals and plants. Fossil bones were being collected in ever increasing numbers and attempts were being made to make them 'fit in' with existing knowledge. Other people adhered rigidly to the strict biblical interpretation of Creation, dismissing the notion that living species had evolved from extinct species, but had been created whole and entire, for man's benefit. The fossils being found were accepted as being merely of antediluvian origin, serving as further proof that many species of animals had failed to survive the Noachian flood. Science as we know it today was still in its infancy and did not come of age until the final decades of the nineteenth century. The term 'scientist' only appeared in the 1840s to distinguish the growing band of people actively engaged in research from those of more literary leanings. As the century progressed scientific endeavour became more specialized and defined. Indeed, the term 'oceanography' was only coined during the publication of the results of the now-famous world cruise of HMS *Challenger*, which appeared in 50 volumes containing almost 30,000 pages, from 1880 to 1895.[2]

In 1849 there were no degree courses in natural history. This subject was taught to medical students, almost as an optional extra. The object was to give a grounding in comparative anatomy and physiology and also in botany, which had been linked with medicine since the days of herbalism. As an Arts subject, it was meant to complement the courses in philosophy, so practical work by these students was non-existent. Agriculture was taught in Queen's College Galway, but by prior agreement with Prof. Skilling[3], first Professor of Agriculture, it was quite separate from natural history.

As already mentioned, the first person to be appointed to the Chair of Natural History was Alexander Gordon Melville, M.D., D.Sc., M.R.C.S.E. With his own background in science and medicine, and considering the state of knowledge in the subject at this time, Melville was unusually well qualified for the post. He

was also quite young, being only 30 years old when appointed. Prior to his arrival in Galway, Melville had already built up quite a reputation for himself as a comparative anatomist. The experience gained as Demonstrator in Anatomy at the University of Edinburgh following his graduation there with the degree M.D. certainly stood him in good stead. Curiously enough, although he later gained his membership of the Royal College of Surgeons of England, he never practised, having, it was said, a constitutional dislike of surgical operations. This was not in the least unusual. Charles Darwin, Richard Owen, Thomas Henry Huxley and many of the other great naturalists of this period started their careers in medical school but, at this time, it needed a strong stomach to assist in surgical procedures where operations were performed without anaesthetics and when cadavers used for dissection were frequently putrid and often stolen from the grave.

Melville moved to Oxford where his interest in comparative anatomy led to him being appointed as an assistant to Sir Henry Wentworth Acland, an eminent anatomist who was Lee's Reader of Anatomy at the time and who later became Regius Professor of Medicine at the University of Oxford. In Oxford Melville also developed his interests in art and architecture and also became something of an authority on bookbinding and book illustration. One of Melville's achievements as Acland's assistant was to set up a museum of comparative anatomy in Christ Church College Oxford, where he later gained his D.Sc. While there he began to make his ideas in comparative anatomy known to his professional colleagues, giving a number of lectures to the Fellows and Members of the Royal Zoological Society in London.

History has not been kind to Melville. Although quite active in many different spheres, very little is known of him today. Perhaps because of his argumentative personality, most of his academic colleagues had little of good to say about Melville or his work, so it would appear they chose to say nothing at all. That he was arrogant there is no doubt, as this can be detected in his published work, yet he did enjoy a certain amount of respect from his peers elsewhere. For instance, Alexander Goodman More[4] the noted botanist, found Melville extremely helpful when compiling *Cybele Hibernica*, published in 1866, and said as much in his personal correspondence, which was edited by Moffat (1898). Ducker (1988), who edited some of the letters of William Henry Harvey, cites one particular letter written by Harvey in 1844, which offers a telling insight into both Melville's personality and professional abilities:

> My *opponents* are both friends of mine - Dr Steele (who is '*not a scientific botanist*') & Dr Melville, author of the Dodo, who is very scientific, but very quarrelsome and opinionated. If I had a vote, & were not myself a candidate I should support Dr Melville, though *personally* I am much more attached to Steele. I do not think Steele however would add to the reputation of the Chair, & I know that Melville *could*, if he *would* - the only question in this case is '*would he*'? - If I do not get it I hope he will ...[5]

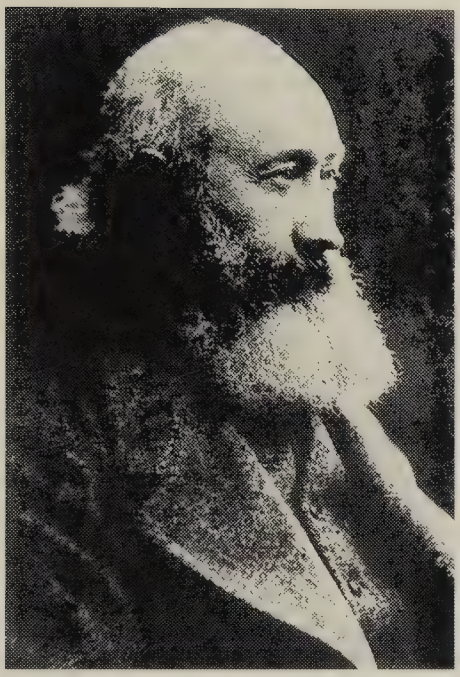

Plate 1: Alexander Gordon Melville (1819-1901) M.D., D.L., D.Sc., M.R.C.S.E., first Professor of Natural History at Queen's College Galway. *(Private Collection)*

As mentioned earlier, Melville was an excellent comparative anatomist, which ability had been developed as a result of his medical training. Looking again at his papers after a century and a half, one is struck by his meticulous eye for detail. His conclusions were arrived at only after careful analysis of the facts. Indeed, in one paper on the variable anatomy of mammalian and reptilian vertebrae (Melville, 1848), he had the temerity to question the findings of Dr Richard Owen, one of the foremost palaeontologists of the nineteenth century and best remembered today as the man who coined the term 'dinosaur' in 1842.[6] In his paper, originally read at a meeting of the Zoological Society in London, Melville was highly critical of the work done by Owen in reconstructing fossil reptiles from the enormous numbers of bones then being acquired by the British Museum. As the published discussion shows, Owen was considerably angered by Melville's comments on how the vertebral column had evolved, based on his studies on comparative anatomy. Undeterred, Melville returned to the subject later, reasserting his conviction that vertebrae varied considerably between species as a result of function (Melville, 1849). Popular opinion at the time favoured Owen, but recent palaeontological work at the Natural History Museum has shown that most of the dinosaur skeletons put together by Owen are in fact wrongly constructed.[7] To suit his own theories, Owen occasionally confused biped vertebrae with quadruped vertebrae and even herbivore skulls with carnivore skulls, something that would be obvious from the dentition, even to an untrained eye. Melville regularly questioned Owen's conclusions regarding the evolution and extinction of dinosaurs at meetings while in London, so the realisation over 150 years later that he was largely right all along is a belated vindication of his professional abilities.

In Galway, William King first Professor of Geology and Mineralogy, worked closely and, it would seem, quite amicably with Melville. Details of King's life and academic achievements have been published by Harper (1988) while his impact on Irish geology has been elucidated by Herries Davies (1988). Like

Melville, King had a meticulous eye for detail and any anomalies seen while working on fossils tended to be noted rather than ignored. This characteristic led to him achieving international renown when he correctly described the bones of *Homo neanderthalensis* and interpreted their importance to the evolutionists as belonging to an early hominid. With assistance from Melville, King was one of the first to acknowledge that specimens of crinoids and other related echinoderms collected by deep soundings off the west coast from HMS *Porcupine* were, in fact, hitherto unknown deepsea species and not shallow water species that had somehow got caught in the sounding cable while it was being deployed (King, 1862).[8] The realisation that life could exist at hitherto unheard of depths was becoming more accepted. Since the early decades of the nineteenth century, the Azoic Theory propounded by Edward Forbes among others was becoming more and more untenable. Based on Forbes' own limited findings, the Azoic Theory stated that, with increasing depth and decreasing light levels, both the number of species and the number of individuals decreased to a point where, below 300 fathoms (1800 feet), the seabed is devoid of life. Consequently, in an effort to refute this theory, when HMS *Porcupine* called at Galway for regular coaling and re-victualling, King managed to have a look at the material which had been dredged up, before it was packed off to London and Oxford by mail-train. Later oceanographic cruises in 1869 and 1870 followed up and confirmed the findings of the earlier *Porcupine* cruises as well as the cruises of HMS *Lightning*, made during the years 1865-1868 off the south and west coasts.

The lack of sufficient lecture theatres in Q.C.G. was commented on regularly in the early annual reports but, for the teaching of natural history, the lack of adequate museum facilities was an additional problem (Queen's University of Ireland, 1850, 1851, 1852). In a recent paper detailing the origins of the museum in Q.C.G., Harper (1996b) states that William King was to have overall responsibility for the collection, curation and display of material even though the museum was to encompass the physical sciences and engineering as well as the biological sciences and geology. Although the college authorities never acceded to his frequent requests for a full-time curator to be appointed, King managed to build up the geological specimen collection by availing of the strong inter-institutional links which existed in the early years between the Queen's Colleges and the Geological Survey of Ireland, itself set up in 1845. As detailed by Herries Davies (1983), Thomas Oldham, local director of the Survey was instructed in 1846 to collect five representative sets of specimens. Two sets were for the Geological Survey museums in London and Dublin and the other three were for the new museums which were to be established in the Queen's Colleges in Belfast, Cork and Galway.

It would seem that, following King's lead, Melville set himself the task of building up a botanical and zoological specimen collection, something he would have had good experience of from his time in Oxford. Again, it must be said that, as in other areas of overlapping responsibility, Melville appears to have

worked quite satisfactorily with King in building up the museum collections. Within a few years the collection of zoological specimens was quite extensive and, by the end of the century, according to Anderson (1899), the museum in Q.C.G. ranked with the best teaching collections to be found in other third level institutions. Further details of the development of the museum, known today as the James Mitchell Museum, can be found in Harper (1996a).

In spite of statements to the contrary, Q.C.G. was not an academic backwater. Visits by VIPs were frequent, and according to the local press, they were treated with all due respect and honours. When Queen Victoria's Consort Prince Albert visited Queen's College Galway in January 1856, he was met by Joseph O'Leary, Vice-President and Professor of History and English Literature, in the company of Professors Melville and King. As with all important visitors who came to the college at this time, Prince Albert was brought on a tour of the museum and its library and also walked the grounds, including the President's Garden and botanical plot, before returning to the museum where he presented a gift of a specially inscribed copy of William Macgillivray's *Natural history of Dee-side and Braemar*, edited by E. Lankester (1855).[9] The Prince also complimented Melville and King on the completeness of the museum collection and its layout. Another royal personage who received similar treatment was Prince Louis Napoleon of France, whose visit in 1857, which fuelled the existing francophobia of the time, has been detailed by Collins (1996).

Perhaps Melville's greatest contribution to the literature of natural history was the book *The Dodo and its kindred* published in 1848, which he co-authored with the geologist Hugh Edwin Strickland. Unfortunately Strickland's early death in 1852 at the age of 42 robbed Melville of the opportunity for further joint work. Although the title conjures up images more in keeping with the writings of Lewis Carroll, this work is in fact a well researched study of various species of recently extinct flightless birds, based on a small number of incomplete skeletons, assorted bones, preserved skins, feathers and contemporary illustrations, which had been acquired by various collectors over the centuries.

As Strickland & Melville (1848: 62) pointed out, the book was aimed at ' ... rescuing these anomalous creatures from the domain of fiction'. Central to the discussion was the involvement of man in the disappearance of these species and whether or not they would have become extinct anyway. An attempt was made to unravel folklore from fact in descriptive accounts going back to the sixteenth century, when the Dodo was still to to be found on the island of Mauritius. In pursuing his own research, Melville had access to bones in the British Museum as well as Oxford. Due credit must be given for his painstaking work, noting the anatomical affinities to other species, yet at the same time highlighting rather than ignoring the anomalies. At the conclusion of his anatomical studies, Melville felt that the Dodo was more closely related to the dove and pigeon family than any other avian group.

This immediately placed him at odds once more with Richard Owen who, in an earlier study of just one Dodo bone in the British Museum collection, had concluded that this extinct group was related to the vulture family. Owen had previously published a paper in 1839 establishing a new genus *Dinornis* as a result of studying some bones from New Zealand of a hitherto unknown, but now extinct, giant flightless bird related to the Kiwi. The subsequent discovery of a complete *Dinornis* skeleton, which closely matched Owen's model had further enhanced his reputation as a comparative anatomist in the eyes of the public. As a result, he felt he was in a position of authority regarding all such animals. Following the publication of their book, Strickland published a number of supplementary notes (Strickland, 1849, 1850), based on further studies of new specimens and contemporary illustrations, to support the findings of the book. Melville took no further part in this vigorous defence as, by this time, he had left Oxford for Galway. Again, it must be said that his relations with Strickland were always cordial, and in his memoirs, which were edited by Jardine (1858), Strickland gives due credit to Melville for his expertise in avian anatomy and his support for a new theory on the phylogenetic importance of this group of birds which went against popular thinking. A recent study by Quammen (1996) on the continuing increase in the rate of extinctions globally in the twentieth century cites the importance of Strickland and Melville's seminal work in identifying man as prime cause for the depletion of the planet's biodiversity.

After his appointment to the Dept of Natural History, Melville became interested in the fauna of Galway Bay. This is reflected in his publications after 1850, which changed in subject matter from comparative anatomy to marine faunal studies. One paper (Melville, 1851), a list of 10 species of crustacea dredged up from various stations around Aran and Bertraghboy Bay, gives an early indication of the kind of work he was willing to pursue. Another published paper (Melville, 1857), a list of the crustacea of Galway Bay, has served as a model for successive generations of marine researchers, and in consequence is frequently cited in the literature, most recently by Ó Céidigh (1996) who puts Melville's pioneering work into its regional context.

As can be seen from various sources, Melville was also active as a field naturalist, collecting and noting the locations of many plant specimens from all parts of Connemara. According to Desmond (1994), there are collections of plants made by Melville in the herbaria of the National Museum of Wales and Queen Mary College London. Kent & Allen (1984) state that there are also specimens collected specifically in the Galway area (vice-counties H15, H16 and H17) in 1852 by Melville to be found in the Warwick Archaeological and Natural History Society Museum. Scannell & Synott (1987) also give due credit to Melville for his work. Indeed, like his anatomical and zoological work, the accuracy of his botanical observations has resulted in Melville being regularly cited in the literature, usually confirming the location of species noted during his

time in Galway. Recent examples are papers by Roden (1993) and Cotton et al.(1994). So, while it can be seen that Melville's scientific work was of an excellent standard, it is in his leisure time activities that Melville made an impact on the people of Galway and, almost half a century before the Galway Archaeological and Historical Society was founded, pursued the kind of activities which are associated with the Society today.

More than any other member of staff in Q.C.G. at this time, Melville did much to bridge the gap between town and gown by making himself available for public lectures which were freely given in his spare time. As well as being a guest lecturer to organised groups and societies in other cities and towns (Melville 1860), in Galway Melville was a frequent guest lecturer at the Mechanics' Institute and advertisements appeared regularly in the local press announcing lectures on many aspects of natural history at such venues as Mrs Carrigan's Large Room and Kilroy's Assembly Room. In the winter of 1860-61, for instance, Melville gave a series of public lectures each Tuesday and Saturday, on geology, to an enthusiastic audience at Mrs Carrigan's Large Room, which was situated at the north end of Eyre Square beside the present day Imperial Hotel, where, coincidentally, the Galway Archaeological and Historical Society currently holds its Winter Lectures and public meetings. The proceeds of these lectures were given to the St Vincent de Paul Society ' ... for the relief of the poor of the city' and, in consequence, Melville was usually introduced by Fr Peter Daly who, among his many interests, was deeply involved with the Society.[10] It says a lot for the literary life of Galway that such lectures were so well attended. Indeed, in his editorial on the subject in the *Galway Vindicator* (Wed. 2nd Jan. 1861), John Francis Blake[11] had nothing but praise for Melville's lectures:

> The ennobling part science plays in the enlightenment and amelioration of the human race has stamped it with an almost sacred character. When for the while leaving the field of education and bringing its fertilising influences into the domain of charity, science becomes doubly sacred.

The text of each lecture was usually reported in detail in the *Galway Vindicator* and gave the ordinary individual some idea of the level of knowledge in the subject at this time. For instance, in his lecture of Thursday 17th January, which was reported in the *Galway Vindicator* (Sat. 19th Jan. 1861), Melville spoke on submarine geology and of the additional information being collected as a result of the deepsea surveys being conducted in association with the laying of transatlantic submarine cables. In summing up, Melville stated ' ... all life appears to cease about 500 fathoms down and one then moves into a region of death and sterility'. In another lecture, Melville spoke about the process of fossilisation which, he said, occurred only in the ocean depths. With our present day knowledge of the subject, it is easy to make light of Melville's erroneous pronouncements, but one can see how such lectures must have fired the imagination of those listening. Some of his public lectures also brought out the

serious side of his subject. The *Galway Vindicator* (Wed. 23rd Jan. 1861), reported that his lecture of the previous night on geochronology was remarkable in that it was attended by a considerable number of Catholic clergy. No doubt they were interested in exposing any possible conflict with the biblical interpretation of the theistic creation of the earth. However, on this occasion he must have been uncharacteristically diplomatic, as it appears his lecture was ' ... frequently applauded, and at the close the plaudits were warm and general'.

The following winter, Melville was again prevailed upon to give another series of 10 lectures, entitled 'Life and organisation in plants and animals'. Commencing in December 1861 and running on into 1862, this series was also remarkable in that it included two field trips and culminated in a written examination in botany, under the auspices of the Science and Art Dept of the Council on Education Committee, which was responsible for funding these courses in cities and towns throughout Britain and Ireland. Indeed, more than any other single factor, these courses contributed to the explosion in interest in natural history which occurred at this time and resulted in the rise of the amateur naturalists' field clubs. Following the written examination in June 1862, which was sat by a large number ' ... of gentlemen and some of the most respectable ladies of the town', Melville was asked to run another course, commencing that same month and including field trips, taking advantage of the summer season, to further study the flora and fauna of the vicinity. However, relations between Melville and the public seem to have soured somewhat at this point and he decided not to proceed with this planned course. It is not clear what exactly happened, but it would seem that his own outspoken personality led to him alienating himself from his audience at a most inopportune time. According to the *Galway Vindicator* (Wed. 7th June 1862), Melville ' ... incurred the displeasure of the people of Galway by some indiscreet expressions made use of by him at the finish of his lectures. His reflections on the national character were as unjust as they were uncalled for'.

One can only surmise as to what Melville actually said, and even the publication of an abject apology some days later in the same paper did not help things. It is possible that the whole episode was blown out of proportion by John Francis Blake of the *Galway Vindicator*, as he had been prevented from attending a previous lecture on volcanism, which included details of a recent eruption of Vesuvius, because all tickets had been sold in advance. Blake demanded the right to report the lecture, invoking the freedom of the press, but was told personally by both Fr Peter Daly and Melville that there was no room for him. Fr Daly and Blake had clashed many times over various issues, so this refusal was taken to heart by Blake. In a particularly vitriolic editorial, Blake later demanded an apology from both Fr Daly and Melville, but received no satisfaction. Considering the large audiences his lectures attracted, with the proceeds all going to charity, it seems rather extreme that Melville's good work for the poor

of the town should have been so easily jeopardised. In an open letter published later in the *Galway Vindicator*, Joseph Semple, chairman of the Galway branch of St Vincent de Paul Society at the time, and great grandfather of Maurice Semple, local historian, one time committee member and treasurer of the Galway Archaeological and Historical Society (Semple, *pers. comm.*), asked for forgiveness on all sides in order that the next planned series of lectures could commence, but all to no avail. Again, one can only surmise as to the consequent effect on learning in Galway if those lectures and field trips had gone ahead, as elsewhere it was from such beginnings that many of the country's learned clubs and societies sprang up in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Indeed, it is this writer's opinion that it was only with the arrival of the amateur naturalist and the setting up of the amateur naturalists' field clubs across the country, that the Golden Era of Irish natural history began. Curiously enough, very little has been written about this aspect of our cultural heritage, although recently published material collected by Foster (1997) goes some way in rectifying this.[12]

As has already been stated, Melville was an excellent field naturalist, and each year his students, whether of medicine or arts, took part in at least one major excursion, usually to the Aran Islands. One such excursion, detailed in the *Galway Vindicator* (Sat. 28th May, 1864) gives some idea of what was involved. With the PS *Pilot*,[13] under the command of Capt. Paddy Reilly, chartered specially for the trip by the Academic Council of Q.C.G., Melville, accompanied by Mr George H. Kinahan[14] of the Geological Survey of Ireland, his brother John Robert[15] and a Dr Underwood of Loughrea, departed from Galway with a number of students and steamed out to Aran on the morning of Monday 23rd May 1864. Both Kinahans were extremely interested in the flora and fauna of the region and were publishing papers on their various excursions to the west of Ireland at this time (e.g. Kinahan 1863 and 1869). Arriving at Killeany Bay the PS *Pilot* dropped anchor and lunch was served before those on board went ashore.

> Much time was spent examining specimens of plants, rare in Europe and Britain, which everywhere grew in profusion ... Glasson Rock was studied and its geology commented on. Many seabirds were noted as they flew or swam in the vicinity of their nests. After some time spent admiring this splendid scene and shooting some of the rarer kinds of waterfowl the old fort of Duchar(sic) was visited.

From the account above one can see how the science of ornithology has thankfully changed since this time, from collection to conservation of rare species. A tour of other archaeological monuments and ruins was completed before the party returned to the PS *Pilot* for dinner. The following day, they steamed to Kilmurvey, where they were perfectly placed to tour other sites of archaeological interest culminating in a visit to Dun Aengus, at which an unusual ceremony took place.

> Dr Melville assembled the group at the centre of the fort and it being Her Majesty's Birthday, called for a cheer for the Queen, which was responded to with such good will that the very puffins forsook their native cliffs in sheer fright.

The next day, steam was got up and the PS *Pilot* proceeded for Greatman's Bay in Connemara, where some dredging was done and a large collection of specimens put aside for later identification. Later that day, the PS *Pilot* headed for Galway, steaming close to the coast and noting the geology along the way. Arriving off Mutton Island at 6pm in a glorious sunset, the steamer was loudly cheered by the crew of HMS *Royal Charlotte*, a cutter stationed in Galway, as the PS *Pilot* still had a large amount of bunting and flags hoisted since the Queen's Birthday celebrations of the previous day. Other field trips to Aran and across Galway Bay to Ballyvaughan and Newquay, to study the flora, fauna and antiquities of the Burren, were frequently made using the steamers SS *Vestal* and SS *Midge* of the Ballast Board,[16] whenever these ships came to Galway on their tours of inspection.

Plate 2: Natural History Museum Queen's College Galway in the late 19th century. Some of the specimens photographed here will be familiar to present day students of zoology as they are still used in the teaching of comparative anatomy and evolutionary studies. The room itself now houses the James Mitchell Museum, where the geological specimens and the collection of fossils are also available for study. *(U.C.G. Dept of Geology, now NUI, Galway)*

Melville had one son, Andrew, who, it would appear, inherited his father's outspokenness. While still a medical student at Q.C.G., he was responsible for the Extraordinary Visitation which was convened in Dublin Castle in 1870, as a result of a formal complaint he had made against Prof. Richard Doherty, first Professor of Midwifery, and his clinical tutor. Murray (1994) has given some details of this episode, but in essence, the complaint centred around the alleged failure of Prof. Doherty to give the clinical tuition, which was an important component of the course. Doherty was at some disadvantage in that he did not have access to hospital patients at this time, a prior agreement giving access to patients in the County Infirmary and the Union Workhouse, which had been in existence for ten years, had come to an end in 1859. According to Murray (1994:120), to overcome this disadvantage, Doherty prevailed on the College Council to purchase the collection of postmortem specimens and instruments of obstetrical and related interest which had been accumulated by the noted Dublin obstetrician William Montgomery. This collection, known as the Montgomery Museum, the remnants of which are housed today in the Maternity Dept of University College Hospital Galway, was used extensively by Doherty for the benefit of his students. Andrew Melville was not happy with this, and tried without success to gain access himself to female patients in the County Infirmary. As a consequence of this failure to study patients, he took action to seek a refund of that part of his College fees which related to clinical tuition, as he felt he had received none.

When he received no satisfaction from the College authorities, Melville decided to go public with his grievances in a detailed letter, which was published in the *Lancet* (Melville, 1869). Reaction to such an extraordinary publication was swift and unprecedented. Following a special meeting of the Academic Council, Melville was informed that he had been rusticated (i.e. suspended) for a period of three years for bringing the College into disrepute. In a surprisingly public exercise in damage limitation, there followed a series of letters in the *Lancet* by members of Academic Council, including Edward Berwick President of Q.C.G., William Lupton Registrar and various professors of medicine. Each letter was replied to in full by Melville, with other Q.C.G. students and even the editorial board of the *Lancet* taking sides with their own comments. The result of this very public airing of his grievances and subsequent treatment by the College was that Melville was granted his wish.

An Extraordinary Visitation was convened in Dublin Castle on 30th and 31st March 1870 to hear the complaint of Andrew Smith Melville against his College, as laid out in his letters to the *Lancet* and his appeal against rustication. The Visitors presiding consisted of Sir Maziere Brady, Vice-Chancellor of the Queen's University of Ireland, Dr John T. Banks, President of the King and Queen's College of Physicians and Dr Rawdon Macnamara, President of the Royal College of Surgeons. Queen's College Galway was well represented with President

Berwick in attendance along with William Lupton who, besides being Registrar was a barrister by profession, Prof. Doherty and a number of other Faculty of Medicine professors. As statements were read out and witness after witness was called to testify, it became obvious that some academics had no doubt who was really at fault. In a written statement to Edward Berwick, defending Doherty's lectures and practicals, Prof. James V. Browne[17] spelt it out (Q.C.G. 1870: 53):

> He (Andrew Melville) is set on by his father, who is always at war with his brothers and is not on terms of friendship with one of them; and this is nothing but an attempt to annoy the school, which he is always abusing ... One of Dr Melville's great grievances is that he cannot get on the Council. I never saw his name on a voting slip; nobody could sit on a council with him. He is the real author of the letter bearing his son's signature - a most disrespectful, groundless, crotchety document, and of no further use than to annoy.

In reply to such an extraordinary allegation, Andrew Melville was quick to point out that his father had taken no part in his action against College and, indeed there is no evidence to support Browne's allegation. Finally, in his own lengthy answer to the Visitors, Doherty contended that practicals using the Montgomery Museum were tantamount to clinical lectures. After deliberating on the evidence, the Visitors accepted Doherty's view. They also asked that Andrew Melville be refunded his clinical tuition fees, something that had already been done many weeks before in an unsuccessful effort to defuse the situation. His rustication was reduced from three years to one year, and he was also asked to further his medical education elsewhere.

Following this judgement, Andrew Melville moved to Edinburgh to continue his studies at his father's old Alma Mater. To his credit, he had also inherited his father's interest in natural history, and was invited to lecture part-time on botany and zoology at the Edinburgh School of Arts. Unfortunately, he died suddenly in Edinburgh before he could finish his studies. According to Desmond (1994) there are some plant specimens collected by Andrew Melville among the herbarium collections of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain.

Melville himself retired in 1882 after 33 years of service, but was not replaced immediately. This was because of a rather curious arrangement agreed in 1867 by which both he and William King received an addition to their salaries on the understanding that when either chair became vacant, the surviving professor would take on the duties of both chairs. Accordingly, Prof. King was appointed Professor of Mineralogy, Geology and Natural History that same year.[18]

Melville left Q.C.G. and when he did, according to Foley (1989-90: 77), quoting Moffett [1887], ' ... he did not leave behind a single friend in Galway'. Melville sold his house in Shantalla and retired to Knockawn, Portlaw, Co. Waterford where he lived quietly, dying at the advanced age of 82 years on 8th June 1901. An anonymous obituary which appeared in a local newspaper (*Galway Express*, 15th June, 1901), neatly sums up Melville's personality:

He was never popular with his students, as he was stern of manner, and maintained the most strict and unbending discipline in his classes. When, however, he accompanied the classes on botanical excursions, he laid aside all his sternness, and became a most genial and agreeable companion, interesting the students, not only in the flowers and plants, but in the archaeology of the district, with which he was well acquainted.

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## NOTES

1 Two examples of absurd conclusions worth mentioning are cited by Barber (1980: 40-41) and relate firstly to the arrival of specimans of the first Birds of Paradise to the British Museum, which had their legs cut off to facilitate packing. Leglessness thereupon became enshrined as a characteristic of the species and popular writers went into rhapsodies describing these little creatures spending all of their lives on the wing. Only the arrival of a Bird of Paradise complete with legs put paid to these fantasies. In the second example, John Edward Gray, Keeper of Zoology at the British Museum made a similar mistake when reviewing a book on the fauna of India, published by naturalists attached to the Indian civil service. He dismissed as inaccurate, drawings of certain species of turtle because they showed no holes in the flippers, which could be seen quite clearly in the British Museum specimens. The authors replied icily and publicly that, as everyone in India knew, it was the custom for fishermen to make these holes after catching the turtles, to tie the flippers together to immobilise them. These incidents also highlight the huge gulf of knowledge that existed between the 'professional' naturalist who spent his time listing and arranging specimens in a museum and the 'amateur' or field naturalist, who went out into the countryside, observing and noting how different species interacted with each other in nature.

2 HMS *Challenger* was a Pearl class wooden hulled steam-assisted screw corvette of over 2300 tons, commissioned at Woolwich in 1858. The three and a half year voyage of HMS *Challenger* from December 1872 to May 1876 has frequently been referred to as marking the birth of oceanography and has made her the most famous oceanographic research ship of all. Following this cruise, she was withdrawn from active service and re-commissioned in July 1976 as a Naval Reserve and Coast Guard Drill Ship at Harwich. Subsequently becoming a stores hulk at Chatham Royal Dockyard in 1880, HMS *Challenger* was sent for breaking up in 1921 when her hull became unsound. Rice (1986: 30-41) has given concise details of the contribution of HMS *Challenger* to marine research, while Deacon (1971) has written a wider account of developments in marine science at this time.

3 Thomas Skilling was Professor of Agriculture in Queen's College Galway from its opening in 1849 until his death in 1865. Before being appointed to this post he had worked with Lord Wallscourt, who owned a farm of some 1500 acres at Ardfry, near Oranmore, where, according to Cunningham [1995], a novel experiment in profit-sharing had been ongoing from the early 1830s. Lord Wallscourt provided the initial capital while Skilling and his tenants all shared in the profits, or losses, from each year's harvest. Details of this experiment are to be found in Caird (1850: 56-57). As farm manager, Skilling had provided the scientific skill to improve farming practices and had published a number of texts based on his experiences, notably *The science and practice of agriculture* (1846), *The farmer's ready reckoner* (1848), and *The turnip and its culture* (1857). After Skilling's appointment to Queen's College Galway, project work on the Ardfry farm initially formed an important component of the courses taught, although it was discontinued after the deaths of both Lord Wallscourt and Skilling. Subsequent practical work by students of agriculture was carried out on land bought by the College at Dangan, where the Sports Grounds are located today.

4 Alexander Goodman More (1830-1895) was one of the foremost botanists to work on the Irish flora in the nineteenth century. Although dogged by ill-health throughout most of his life, he nevertheless managed to complete an enormous amount of work himself and, by his efforts, spur others on to complete similar work on the Irish flora. His greatest contribution to the literature was the publication of *Cybele Hibernica* in 1866, which he co-authored with David Moore. He died while compiling a second edition of this great work, which was completed by Nathaniel Colgan and Reginald Scully in 1898. Charles Bethune Moffat published a comprehensive biography which included his correspondence and a significant amount of his published work in *Life and letters of Alexander Goodman More* (1898).

5 It would appear that, prior to his successful appointment to the Chair of Natural History at Q.C.G., Melville had been actively seeking a professorship in various colleges. The much sought-after appointment W.H. Harvey is referring to in this letter is the Chair of Botany at Trinity College Dublin which had become vacant in 1844 on the retirement of William Allman (1776-1846). In the event, the post was filled by Cork-born George James Allman (1812-1898), whose contribution to the study of botany in T.C.D. has been detailed by Webb (1991). Of interest here is the fact that William Allman's son, George Johnston Allman (1824-1904), was a renowned mathematician, being appointed Professor of Mathematics in Queen's College Galway in 1853 which post he held until his retirement in 1893. As detailed by Foley (1989-90:79-80), both men have frequently been confused with each other, because of the close similarity of their names. Prof. George James Allman later became Regius Professor of Natural History at Edinburgh University and went on to become a respected zoologist with an international reputation, gained from his work on marine invertebrates, including specimens collected during the HMS *Challenger* cruise. At various times he was President of the Linnean Society and the British Association for the Advancement of Science. He was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1854 and received the Cunningham Medal of the Royal Irish Academy in 1878.

6 Richard Owen (1804-1892) was in his time one of the most well-known palaeontologists of the nineteenth century. Prior to the publication of *On the origin of species* Owen's name was frequently mentioned in the press and his public lectures were usually sellout successes. His very conspicuousness at this time makes him appear more important than Darwin as, in his lifetime, he was to popularise science and scientific thinking. With his ability to successfully badger government ministers for finance by skilful use of institutional power, science was given such a prominence in learning that its continued growth into the twentieth century was assured. Without Owen's work in the mid-nineteenth century, it is doubtful if science would have been accepted as a suitable subject for third level education at that time. Popularly known as 'the British Cuvier' because of his great work in comparative anatomy (publishing over 400 papers in the process), he was recognised as the leading authority in all matters relating to zoological or palaeontological classification. Barber (1980: 171-183) details Owen's contribution to science, in particular the setting up of the Natural History Museum using the specimens from the British Museum's collections in South Kensington London, in spite of the strong opposition of Darwin and his followers. His competitive treatment of rivals, coupled with his theistic theory of evolution which clashed with Darwin's, and his strategy of covert promotion of evolutionary thinking made Owen a controversial figure, both feared and hated by a substantial number of his fellow naturalists. One reason why Owen is relatively unknown today is that, even before his death, disciples of Darwin had commenced a campaign of character assassination by making his rather dogmatic personality the issue, thus undercutting his scientific credibility. In the one hundred odd years since his death, Owen has been systematically written out of Victorian natural history or, at best, remembered solely for his rejection of the theory of evolution by natural selection, by pro-Darwinian historians whose works have dominated this subject in the twentieth century. There are many publications available dealing with this whole period, but perhaps the recent paper by Wilson (1996) is most illuminating. For a more sympathetic analysis of Owen's contribution to science, the recent biography by Rupke (1994) is recommended. Likewise, the published discussions of Rupke's work by Levere et al. (1995) further put Owen's scientific contribution into context. Most recently, Camerini (1997) favourably compares Owen to Huxley as one of the greatest scientists of the nineteenth century.

7 It is now generally accepted that the first dinosaur skeleton to be correctly reconstructed was *Hadrosaurus foulkii*, which was pieced together in 1876 by Joseph Leidy, the leading American palaeontologist of his time, and displayed as part of the celebrations which took place honouring the centenary of the declaration of American Independence in Washington. This species was named by Leidy after William Parker Foulke, an amateur fossil hunter who had unearthed the bones in New Jersey in 1856.

8 HMS *Porcupine* was a wooden hulled paddle powered gun-vessel of just under 500 tons, commissioned at Deptford in 1844. In 1856 HMS *Porcupine* became the Royal Navy's principal survey ship in home waters and, until she was succeeded by HMS *Triton* in 1881, completed a number of major surveys in the waters off the west of Ireland. Although these surveys were primarily to seek new routes off the continental shelf for transatlantic telegraph cables, the results of these deepsea soundings also provided the impetus to develop new fishing grounds.

9 A search of the bookstock of the Hardiman Library has failed to find any trace of this book which, although absent from Steinberger's published catalogue (1913), is listed in Richardson's earlier catalogue (1864).

10 Fr Peter Daly (c.1788-1868) played a key role in the commercial development and modernisation of Galway in the nineteenth century. A skilful entrepreneur, adept in local business development and property speculation, he was a man ahead of his time. With a flair for oratory and a personality that appealed to the ordinary person and resulted in massive popularity for all of his schemes, Fr Daly was especially successful at coercing local investors, as well as the government, into backing his many business ventures. While Chairman of Galway Town Commissioners, he successfully lobbied Parliament for grant aid to complete the programme of canal building in Galway, linking the Corrib system with the sea. He was Director of the Galway Gas Company which, from 1837 provided power and light in the town. Using his position on the Board of the Midland and Great Western Railway Company, he ensured that the railway was brought right into the centre of Galway, terminating at Eyre Square, and, with an eye to future tourist revenue, personally supervised the construction of the Railway Hotel (now the Great Southern Hotel), for many years the largest hotel in Ireland. As a member of the Galway Harbour Commissioners, Fr Daly ensured that a comprehensive programme of port development was undertaken, again with financial backing from Parliament. As Chairman of the Galway Bay Steam Navigation Company, he inaugurated the first regular steamship service between Galway and the Aran Islands in 1858. He was responsible for putting the first steamships on the Corrib to develop trade up the lake as far as Cong, while at the same time becoming involved in the setting up of a line of fast steamships to exploit the growing transatlantic trade. The short-lived Galway Line competed for supremacy of the transatlantic trade with the Cunard and Allen Lines by offering a service to St John's Newfoundland, Halifax Nova Scotia, Boston and New York in the early 1860s. Its history has been detailed by Collins (1994, 1995). Such complex and frequently lucrative business activities led to him clashing with his superiors Dr MacHale Archbishop of Tuam, Dr MacEvilly Bishop of Galway and Cardinal Cullen, then Archbishop of Armagh, on a number of occasions. For further details on the life of this extraordinary man, the comprehensive biography by Mitchell (1983-1984) is recommended.

11 The *Galway Vindicator and Connaught Advertiser*, to give it its full name, was quite an outstanding newspaper of the period, and the only one in the region to be published twice weekly, on Wednesdays and Saturdays. Owned and edited at this time by John Francis Blake, the paper was proud of its Galway roots and its partisan style reflected Blake's judgement when answering criticisms about issues that were close to his own heart. Blake himself claimed that his paper was the best medium for advertising in the west of Ireland. His death in March 1864 saw a moderation in the tone of the paper which, in retrospect, can only be regretted as it gave an insight into the cut and thrust of Galway commercial, political and academic life in the mid-nineteenth century. With the exception of Joyce (1995, 1996), very few studies have been made of such local papers as historical sources of information by researchers.

12 In Galway one must look to the founding of the Galway Archaeological and Historical Society in 1900 for a similar grouping of like-minded individuals. The first President, the Hon. Robert E. Dillon, who later inherited the title Lord Clonbrock, was an active member of the Society, according to Townley (1976), who also made the point that the founding members themselves appeared to come from the more upper class strata of Irish society, rather than the middle class.

Whatever about his station in life, Dillon was a typical amateur naturalist of the time. As well as having an interest in antiquities, he had already made his mark as a gifted naturalist, with a keen interest in entomology. Various publications of Dillon's describe the extensive collection he had put together (Dillon, 1894, 1898, 1900).

13 The prefix PS before the name of a ship denotes that the vessel is a paddle steamer. Built by Laird Brothers of Liverpool, this PS *Pilot* had been bought by her two Masters from the Galway Bay Steam Navigation Co. This company had been set up by Fr Peter Daly in 1858 to operate a service between Aran, Ballyvaughan, Newquay and Galway and to act as tender for the transatlantic steamships of the Galway Line which, unfortunately ceased its service in January 1864. As a result the PS *Pilot* was sold off. Tragically, John M'Intyre, Reilly's partner, succumbed to tuberculosis within weeks of purchasing the PS *Pilot*, leaving Reilly to operate the service alone. For further details of this period in the development of Galway port see Collins (1994,1995).

14 Dublin born George Henry Kinahan (1829-1908), was one of the greatest Irish geologists of the nineteenth century. Known as 'The big miner', Kinahan was a man of boundless physical and intellectual energy. As a geologist, his work of mapping took him to virtually every part of Ireland, giving him an almost encyclopaedic knowledge of the country. Much has been written about his personality by Praeger (1937, 1949) and Herries Davies (1983). His contribution to the Geological Survey of Ireland, which, like the Queen's Colleges was also established in 1845, has been elucidated in a sesquicentennial history by Herries Davies (1995).

15 John Robert Kinahan (1828-1865), brother of the aforementioned G.H. Kinahan was, like Melville, qualified in medicine but became more interested in natural history. Having obtained an M.D. degree in Trinity College Dublin, he lectured widely on botany and zoology under the Science and Art Dept. and was for many years Secretary of the Natural History Society of Dublin. Like his brother, John Robert was a man of exceptional energy and enthusiasm. He wrote extensively on Irish botany, geology and zoology and was a leading figure in Irish scientific life.

16 The Corporation for Preserving and Improving the Port of Dublin, set up in 1786 and better known as the Ballast Board, was one of a number of organisations in existence at this time for the express purpose of servicing the lighthouses, buoys, beacons and other seamarks around the coast of Ireland, and in providing facilities for the surveying and examination of vessels needing repair. The Merchant Shipping Act of 1854 saw the creation of the Port of Dublin Corporation with two distinct areas of responsibility. This led ultimately in 1867 to the Dublin-based responsibilities coming under a new corporation, the Dublin Port & Docks Board, and the responsibility for maintaining the aids to navigation in Irish waters being passed to the Commissioners of Irish Lights, whose excellent work down to the present day in maintaining this service has gone largely unnoticed and unrecognised by the general public.

17 James V. Browne was first Professor of Surgery at Q.C.G. Appointed in 1849, he died in office in 1887. He also held the position of County Infirmary Surgeon and therefore was in a position to say who should, or as in this case, should definitely not, have access to patients in the County Infirmary. Like Melville, Browne was an arrogant man and, according to Murray (1994), his own relations with his academic colleagues were frequently acrimonious. At this hearing, his main cause for complaint was that Andrew Melville regularly refused to doff his hat or otherwise acknowledge him when they met in public!. From the plaintiff's viewpoint it could be construed that the real villain was Browne himself, whose antagonistic attitude towards a medical undergraduate provoked the submission of a formal complaint to the College authorities. Indeed, it can be seen from the published proceedings (Queen's College Galway, 1870) that in fact Browne was the real cause of Doherty's problems, as it was he who had put an end to the agreed visits by undergraduates to the County Infirmary for clinical tuition in midwifery. The acquisition of the Montgomery Museum and its substitution for clinical visits was really only a stopgap measure brought in by Doherty. It is difficult to gauge the quality of the Montgomery Museum today as most of the organs, foetuses and sections have been disposed of in recent years, leaving only a small number of specimens that have somehow survived intact in their original preserving jars.

18 Already suffering from ill health when he took on the extra duties of teaching natural history, Prof. King himself was forced to resign the double chair in 1883 when he became paralysed. He died at his residence, Glenoir, Taylor's Hill on 24th June 1886.

## APPENDIX

## ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY OF THE WRITINGS OF A. G. MELVILLE, PROFESSOR OF NATURAL HISTORY AT QUEEN'S COLLEGE GALWAY, 1849 - 1882.

1. 'On the lepidosiren'. *Rep. Br. Ass. Advmt Sc., Oxford 1847*, [1848]: 78.
   Abstract of paper read on the amphibian characteristics of lungfish.

2. 'On the ideal vertebra'. *Proc. Zool. Soc., Lond.*, 16, 1848: 145-150.
   Paper read at meeting, critical of the work of Cuvier and Owen. Disagreement voiced by Owen in ensuing discussion.

3. Strickland, Hugh Edwin and Melville, Alexander Gordon. 1848. *The Dodo and its kindred; or, the history, affinities, and osteology of the Dodo, Solitaire and other extinct birds of the islands of Mauritius, Rodriguez and Bourbon*, by H.E. Strickland and A.G. Melville. London: Reeve, Benham & Reeve.
   Definitive study of the anatomy, morphology and geographical distribution of these flightless birds.

4. 'Notes on the vertebral column of the iguanadon'. *Phil. Trans.*, 1849: 285-305.
   Detailed anatomical description, with 7 plates inc. 1 fold.

5. 'Concerning the ideal vertebra'. *Proc. Zool. Soc., Lond., 17*, 1849: 11-13.
   Reasserts his conviction concerning the evolutionary anatomy of vertebrae.

6. 'The ideal vertebra'. *Ann. Mag. Nat. Hist.*, 2nd ser., 5, 1850: 57-59.
   Reprinting of no. 5 above.

7. 'Localities of rare British Crustacea'. *Ann. Mag. Nat. Hist.*, 2nd ser., 8, 1851: 236.
   List of 10 spp. dredged up from various stations around Aran and in Bertraghboy Bay.

8. 'Rare Irish Mollusca'. *Ann. Mag. Nat. Hist.*, 2nd ser., 8, 1851: 428.
   Short list of 5 spp. dredged up from 10 to 60 fathoms off Inishere.

9. 'On the occurrence of *Stephanomia contorta* Milne Edwards? and *Agalma gettyana* Hyndman? - additions to the British fauna'. *Nat. Hist. Rev.*, 3, 1851: 75-76.
   Details of discovery in Kingstown (Dun Laoghaire) Harbour in 1850 by Joseph Greene of the former, and discovery in Belfast Lough in 1841 by Edmund Getty of the latter. Melville's conclusion, following examination of the specimens, is that these two medusae are specifically identical. Includes 2 plates.

10. 'Carcinological notes: being a list of the Crustacea Podophthalmia of Galway marine districts, chiefly made during the summer of 1850'. *Proc. Dubl. Nat. Hist. Soc.*, 2, 1856-1859: 41-42.
    Short annotated species listing of specimens collected in the area from Loop Head to Slyne Head to a depth of 60 fathoms.

11. Carcinological notes: being a list of the Crustacea Podophthalmia of Galway marine districts, chiefly made during the summer of 1850. *Nat Hist. Rev.*, 4, 1857: 151-153.
    Reprinting of no. 10 above.

12. 'Lectures on geology'. *Dublin Builder*, Aug. 1 1860, 2(20): 303.
    Synopsis of public lectures given in the Geological Museum, Jermyn St., Dublin.

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# MEMORIES OF QUEEN'S COLLEGE GALWAY, 1904-1906

MICHAEL GEORGE O'MALLEY

*My father, Michael George O'Malley (1886-1961), M.Ch., F.R.C.S., K.St.G., was the sixth son and last but one of the fourteen children of Peter James O'Malley, Kilmilkin, Maam, Co. Galway, and Mary O'Malley, Ballyburke, Westport, Co. Mayo. He was educated at Rockwell College, Tipperary, and entered Queen's College Galway in September 1904. He transferred to the Catholic University School of Medicine in Cecilia Street, Dublin, in 1906, and was one of the first seventeen medical graduates from the National University of Ireland in 1910. He returned to Galway in 1914, and was Professor of Surgery in University College Galway from 1924 until his retirement in 1956.*

*Michael O'Malley lived through a transitional period in Irish political and university life, and saw enormous change in the medical field in Galway and throughout Ireland in his lifetime. He began to write his memoirs in the 1950s, and the section published here deals with his time as a medical student in Galway from 1904 to 1906. The account is in his own words, but a certain amount of editing was involved in the arrangement of the text.*

Sheila Mulloy

Towards[1] the end of September 1904 I entered as a medical student in the Queen's College, Galway (now University College, Galway). The Registrar was Professor Townsend, Professor of Engineering. He built up a successful engineering school in Galway – probably the best in Ireland at that time. He was a tallish, thin man with a long, grey, goatee beard. I remember that when I was entering my name, another boy was there whom I knew at the boarding-school. His father, who was an assistant county surveyor in a Munster county, accompanied him. Mr K. was a pompous man with a full beard. In those days an assistant county surveyor need not necessarily have had any qualifications beyond the knowledge that twenty-two links made a chain. Mr K. was one of those. He was entering his son in the engineering school. He was a very stupid boy: I don't think he ever got a degree. The father, when asked his occupation by Professor Townsend, said he was a civil engineer, and furthermore he possessed a theodolite. Professor Townsend ('Neddy', as he was usually called) was duly impressed. When it came to my turn and he asked me my father's occupation, I murmured rather dejectedly that he was a farmer. The assistant county surveyor drew himself up and said in a pompous voice, 'The farmer is the most independent man of us all.' So everything passed off quite pleasantly.

The Bursar's office was visited. He was Professor Lynham, Professor of Medicine. He had a lame leg and was usually called 'Braddy' Lynham – why, I don't know. He was rarely in his office and the duties were performed by Mr McClelland, an R.I.C. pensioner and a very decent man. Queen's College Galway, in those days was supposed to be a Protestant preserve. The vast majority of the professors and about two-thirds of the students were Protestant. McClelland was a Protestant, but a south of Ireland man. The majority of the students were north of Ireland Presbyterians and he did not like them. When I was paying my fees, he asked me if I was entering for a scholarship. Such a thing had never occurred to me and I had made no preparation. The scholarship examination was a special one with special texts. I told him I had not prepared for it. 'No matter', he said, 'them north of Ireland fellows are not much good.' He was not quite right. We got some very good students from the North, but many came to Galway looking for scholarships. I entered for the scholarship and to my surprise got a prize of £20, which in those days was a great windfall. I was beaten by a north of Ireland man who had already done Second Arts, and had come to Galway for the scholarship.

Plate 1: Postcard of Queen's College, Galway, postmarked 'Southampton Dec. 22, 1909' (Courtesy Professor James P. Murray).

QUEEN'S COLLEGE GALWAY

The Engineering School in Galway at that time was first class. Townsend was apparently a very good lecturer, and he was also an examiner in the Royal University. In those days the students were examined at the Royal University in Earlsfort Terrace. Students from the three Queen's Colleges of Belfast, Cork and Galway, and the Catholic University and Cecilia Street School, were examined there together. For some reason not many of the Galway professors were university examiners. The examining board was recruited mainly from Belfast, the Catholic University and Cecilia Street, with a few from Cork and Galway. Townsend was a good teacher, but the fact that he was a university examiner did his students no harm.

The Arts School in Galway was excellent. The professors were mainly recruited from Oxford and Cambridge. They were Junior Fellows of those universities, and the Galway post was taken whilst they waited for a lectureship or professorship in the mother college. They were brilliant men and many of their students attained eminence in the higher grades of the Civil Service.

The Medical School was feeble and there were few students. The course could not be completed in Galway. One year had to be spent at some other centre – usually Dublin or Edinburgh. The most distinguished man in the Medical School was Professor Pye. He was Professor of Anatomy and Physiology. With the tremendous growth in physiology during the early years of the century, it was quite impossible for him to become proficient in both chairs. He was a very able man with a wide knowledge outside his special subjects. He was a disappointed man and he was, as he used to say, always in a minority of one. He might have been President at one time if there had not been a change of government. He was a Catholic, and a strong supporter of the Liberal Government and the Irish Party. Sir Thomas Moffat was President from 1877 to 1897. He was appointed a professor in 1849 and Registrar in 1870. He was a very old man and the Liberal Government was induced to order a visitation to determine his fitness for the post. Undoubtedly he was in an advanced stage of senility, and he was found to be unfit and was forced to resign in 1897. Professor Pye was expected to be his successor, but in the interregnum the Liberal party was defeated at the polls, and Walter Starkie was appointed for two years. He was succeeded by Professor Anderson, an old Queen's College Galway man, who had a distinguished postgraduate career at Cambridge. This was a sore blow to Professor Pye from which he never recovered.

The Professor of Surgery in my time was William Westropp Brereton. He was a student of Trinity but had no degree from that college. He was a Licentiate of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland. He was appointed to the Chair in 1887, and before that he was a dispensary doctor in Oughterard. His father was, however, a judge and he had influential connections. Opposing him for the chair was Dr. R.B. Mahon, who was a gold medallist of the Royal University, and a

Plate 2:
MICHAEL GEORGE O'MALLEY
1886 - 1961

A portrait in oils by Seán O'Sullivan 1943

*(Courtesy of Eoin O'Brian, editor of A Portrait of Irish Medicine, 1984. Photograph: Davison & Associates Ltd.)*

Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons of England. Needless to say, Professor Brereton, although a charming man, was not a great success and no asset to the Medical School.

Professor Kinkead had the Chair of Midwifery and Gynaecology since 1876. He was a very dignified man and a strict disciplinarian. For his time he was quite good.

Brereton and Kinkead were in the transition period between dirty and clean surgery. Brereton never bridged the gap. Kinkead was meticulous to a fault, and to watch him prepare for an operation was a great lesson. First he scrubbed up thoroughly with soap and water. Then he immersed his hands and forearms in a bath of potassium permanganate. He cleared the permanganate in a bath of oxalic acid. Next he immersed his hands in 1-20 carbolic. He washed off the carbolic with normal saline, put on gloves and started his work. The preparation took half an hour or more. There were few operations in those days; otherwise he would have had no hands left!

John Isaac Lynham was Professor of Medicine. He was a distinguished man, who did not practise outside the College and hospital. He was strong on religion. He was a Methodist, I think, and a native Irish speaker.

The Chair in Materia Medica was occupied by Dr Nicholas W. Colohan.[2] His father was Professor of Medicine from 1849 to 1879. Dr Colohan was a shrewd man with an artistic sense but limited ability. He was very lazy and spent a good part of his time on the Corrib. He was quite a neat operator when he took a job in hands, which was seldom.

In the first year the subjects were Botany, Zoology, Chemistry and Physics. The Professor of Botany and Zoology was Richard John Anderson. His knowledge I am sure was profound, but he made a poor attempt at imparting it. He was a very lovable man and his absentmindedness was a joke. He sat facing his class with his hands in his trouser pockets, and read out from copious reams of notes. He had a diagram on the blackboard, and when he wished to indicate something on the board, he remained sitting and threw a piece of chalk at the diagram! He was a member of the Anatomy Society of Great Britain and Ireland, and afterwards when I became a member, the older men used to tell me all about him. He attended at least once a year to read some obscure paper. He was always put in at the tea interval, and his only audience was the presiding chairman! He taught Geology as well as Botany and Zoology.

Professor Senier was in the Chair of Chemistry. He was a good teacher and held the class well. He entertained the students in a lavish fashion whenever they won a cup at rugby. Physics was taught by President Anderson. He talked above our heads but we had a great respect for him. He was an eminent mathematician.

Practically all the students were in 'digs' in Salthill. There were few houses in Lower and Upper Salthill, but they were all lodging-houses and empty during the winter except for students. I got digs in Sunnyside Lodge, which was next

door to Seapoint House. Both houses are gone and replaced by the Seapoint Ballroom. My two brothers had been in lodgings in Sunnyside fifteen or more years before me. I got a bedroom and sittingroom for five shillings a week. If I shared the sittingroom the charge was three and sixpence a week. During the summer the houses were full of guests and no student would have been kept. The medical year started on 5 November and ended on 24 March. The Arts and Engineering School continued into the first week of June. We provided our own food. My father brought me around to the shops and established credit for me – groceries, meat, coal, etc. I collected the bills once a month and sent them home. Some exhibitions and scholarships kept me in pocket money.

It was a long walk from Upper Salthill to the College, and in the wind and rain it was far from pleasant. There was only a blank wall between Upper and Lower Salthill, extending from Ballinasloe House to Woodside House. There were no houses at all along the New Line, as St. Mary's road was then called. We disliked that walk and generally went along Dominick Street West and up the canal.

In those days the colleges were infested with a type that is now more or less eliminated. I refer to the chronic student – usually medical, sometimes engineering. The cause of the chronicity was usually alcohol. The wretches frequently attached themselves to the 'jibs', as the first year students were called, and tried to induce them to visit the pubs. Many fell; the jibs were flattered by the patronage of the old boys.

The clinical facilities of the Medical School were poor. The County Infirmary with sixty-four beds was staffed by the professors from the College. The surgeons were Brereton, Pye and Colohan. The physicians were Kinkead and Lynham. Kinkead was also gynaecologist. There was one excellent house-surgeon.

In addition to the County Infirmary, the Workhouse Hospital was used by Colohan as a clinic. There was a small dismal fever hospital where the Students' Union now stands. It was nearly always full of typhus and typhoid patients from the Spiddal and Lettermullen areas. I knew nothing about it. I left Galway in April 1906 after passing my Second Medical Examination. Even in my ignorance I became aware of the complete lack of clinical teaching in the hospitals. Indeed I do not know how it was recognised by the General Medical Council.

The Galway of my student days was a decaying town. The grass literally grew on the streets, the shops were shabby and uninviting, and there was a good deal of drunkenness. Wednesdays and Saturdays were the market days and there was then some stir in the town. From early dawn processions of donkey and horse carts came into town along the five main roads – from Spiddal, Moycullen, Headford, Claregalway and Oranmore. The carts carried farm produce and peat. The housewives along the route held up the carts and bought their vegetables

and peat with much bargaining. Those men who had not effected a clearance generally ended up in Eyre Square, Wood Quay or Market Street. The pubs were then visited, and they turned home in the afternoon usually very merry, and indeed in many cases very drunk. Accidents were quite common. A man climbing out of his cart would get caught between the spokes and sustain a compound fracture of the leg. There were always a few compound fractures in the Old Infirmary. They generally became violently septic and often ended in amputation. There were no restaurants and the unfortunate people were fasting in town all day. A very small amount of alcohol was sufficient to render the tired, starving wretches incapable. Goodness knows it was hard to blame them for seeking to drown their misery.

A bad example was set by the well-to-do-classes. I remember a band of them whom we used to call 'the whiskey brigade'. I have seen them reeling through the streets of the town in the middle of the day, and scarcely noticed by the sober members of the population. The mode of transport in the city was the horse tram from Eyre Square to Salthill and the side-cars. The tram cost twopence to Nile Lodge and threepence to Salthill. Parcels were delivered on the way, and the horses were unyoked at the foot of King's Hill. It was a slow mode of travel, and if you were in a hurry you walked. The jaunting-car was too expensive for us students. I remember a retired merchant who lived near our digs at Sunnyside. He got on the tram every morning and went into town to meet his cronies in the various pubs. He came home for his dinner in a slightly inebriated condition. He went to town again after his dinner, and in the evening he was carried by the driver and conductor into his lodgings. That happened day after day.

It was inexpensive to get drunk in those days. A glass of whiskey cost threepence and a pint of porter twopence. A bottle of whiskey, which could make one gloriously drunk, cost two shillings. There was a woman with a large family who lived out near Barna. She brought in a can of milk to town every day, and returned with it full of porter. She brought up her family on porter and they seemed to thrive on it! I am not recommending it as a suitable diet for children, but Mrs H. seemed to think otherwise.

When I returned to Galway in 1914, the horse trams were on the way out, and were being replaced by motor buses. The shops were improved in appearance and the town appeared to be looking up. It is now (late 1950s) a boom town; it has spread out in all directions, and land is at an extravagant price. A small investment in 1914 would mean a fortune at the present day.

NOTES

1 These two paragraphs have been reprinted with kind permission, from *Connemara, Journal of the Clifden & Connemara Heritage Group*, Vol. 2, No. 1 (1995).

2 His son was Arthur W. Colohan, M.B. (1885-1952), composer of *Galway Bay* and other popular nostalgic songs (James P. Murray, *Galway: A Medico-Social History*, p. 230).

# HOMELESSNESS, CRIME, PUNISHMENT AND POOR RELIEF IN GALWAY 1850-1914: AN INTRODUCTION

*(Based on a lecture delivered to the Society on 27th January 1997)*

CAITRÍONA CLEAR

'Tramps and vagrants', when they are mentioned at all, have (appropriately enough, given their constant perambulations) at best, walk-on parts in Irish social history. In two recent publications on aspects of Galway's social history, 'tramps and vagrants' appear fleetingly. John F. Ryan's very valuable account of the life of Gerald O'Donovan, sometime priest and Gaelic revivalist, mentions that when O'Donovan was chaplain to Loughrea Union at the turn of the century, he tried to prevent 'vagrants, tramps, idlers and bad women' from taking the place in the workhouse of those he called the 'decent poor'.[1] Dr. James Murray's important medical history of Galway mentions that vagrants were suspected of bringing smallpox into some Galway towns in 1874, and into Galway city itself a few years later.[2] In both of these accounts, the subjects of this study are lightly sketched in as persons who were accused of not really 'deserving' the benefits which they received, and who were believed to be carriers of disease. In each account the main focus is on something else, so one does not expect the writers to go into any detail on this, but nonetheless it is significant that both Ryan and Murray accept that vagrants would have been scroungers and disease-carriers. This preliminary investigation is not trying to argue that homeless people in receipt of punishment and poor relief never answered to either of these descriptions - it is highly probable that they often did - but to try to find out a bit more about these shadowy figures whose very destitution and mobility put them on the wrong side of the law until 1988, when the crime of vagrancy was taken off the statute books. A particular emphasis will be on their presence in Galway, county and city, in these years. Before looking at Galway in particular it is necessary to define what was legally meant by vagrancy, and to look at patterns of this crime in Ireland as a whole in these years between the Famine and the First World War.

The crime of vagrancy in Ireland was defined by the Vagrancy Act (1824), the Poor Relief Extension Act (1847) and the Vagrancy Act (1871). According to

these acts, a person was committing a crime by begging, by 'wandering abroad without visible means of support', lodging in the open air, going from one Union to another seeking relief, loitering around warehouses, possessing picklocks and other suspicious instruments, gambling, fortune-telling and being an 'incorrigible rogue' or an idle and disorderly person.[3] During the past millenium, the vagrant has been defined as somebody who 'could not give good account of him/herself' (in French, *gens sans aveu*, literally, people without affiliation/alliance) - no family responsibilities, no fixed dwelling, no master or other 'respectable' person to speak up for him or her, no money or wherewithal to make money in a legal fashion.[4] Yet, as shall be shown in this paper, the homeless person who fitted this description in Ireland from 1850 to 1914 could either be brought before the magistrate in the police court as a vagrant, or he/she could be accommodated overnight in the Union workhouse as a 'night-lodger'. The wandering homeless person, was not inevitably a criminal any more than (s)he was inevitably a candidate for poor relief - (s)he stood uneasily at the interface between criminality and pauperhood, and must be looked for in both the judicial statistics/ gaol records, and the archives relating to the Poor Law. The question of when, how or if, chronic poverty becomes defined as 'criminal' is very topical today, when the long-term unemployed are often readily identified as abusers of 'the system' and threats to public security. Reading through the Poor Law and police reports, through the opinions of concerned people in government commissions and other publications, in the 19th and early 20th centuries, reminds us that such perspectives on the poor are not new, and that the modern concept of an 'underclass' - to use a term current in the U.S.A. and creeping in here - has very respectable antecedents.

Ireland 1850-1914 is often described as 'post-Famine Ireland' - characterized by declining population, high emigration, rising prosperity for many of those who remained, urban and rural, and what J. J. Lee has termed 'the modernization of Irish society' - a spectrum of social, economic and political changes. These included higher levels of literacy in English, improvements in transport and communication, an expanding administration including workhouses and prisons, and the schools, hospitals and refuges operated by voluntary organizations but partly under government control. The chronic and highly visible subsistence bordering on destitution which was so much a feature of pre-Famine Ireland was waning in the post-Famine period; the persistence of apparently 'pre-Famine' ways of life in the west caused grave shock when it was revealed in the last quarter of the century.[5] It is now generally accepted that while desperate small-holders were the backbone and the origin of the Land League in 1879, the leadership and real numerical strength of this organization came from the medium to large farmers throughout the country whose 'rising expectations' had been dealt a severe blow by the years 1876-79. Recovery was swift, in most cases.[6] Emigration removed the discontented, and the cities, towns

and rural areas of Ireland on the eve of independence gave the impression of being prosperous and modern, to varying degrees. However not enough attention has been paid to the casualties of economic change in Ireland in this period. Historian Mary Daly can blithely assert that wandering beggars 'gradually melted away' in the half-century after the Famine,[7] but a closer look at gaol records, judicial statistics and Poor Law records reveals that while the actual numbers of the wandering homeless definitely fell in these years, their decline was not as gentle or inevitable a process as Daly's phrase would suggest, and their ongoing presence gave rise to a concern which expressed itself in two government commissions of inquiry. The *Commission of Inquiry into Vagrancy* in 1906, and the *Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-minded*, in 1908, investigated the condition of 'vagrancy' in Ireland as well as in Britain.[8] Gerald O'Donovan was not alone in his opinion that labour colonies would be the most effective solution to vagrancy - other supporters of this proposal, which sometimes included mandatory sterilisation, were found at both ends of the political spectrum, socialists like Sidney and Beatrice Webb, in Britain, for example, developed this idea. Vagrancy was seen as a symptom of 'degeneration', or the supposed hereditary mental and physical weakness used as an explanation for many social, economic and even medical conditions in this period, from chronic poverty to infant mortality to criminality.[9] The vagrant, combining as (s)he did, 'criminality' and 'poverty', was the perfect 'degenerate'.

There are a few reasons for looking at the problem of homelessness, crime and punishment and poor relief in Galway in this period. First of all, Galway is a county of contrasts with good agricultural land and comparatively large farmers to the east, several thriving commercial and administrative centres, a county capital which had been an international port for centuries, and which had, at this stage, a university as well as a thriving commercial sector, a gaol and a hospital. To the west, moreover, were some of the smallest holdings in the country and some of the most acute and harrowing manifestations of what was euphemistically called 'distress' in the 1880s were to be found in Connemara, while the Congested Districts Board and other government bodies would focus on Connemara as well as other areas to the west as particularly in need of development in the 1890s and early 1900s.[10]

To put the discussion into perspective, however, we must look at Ireland as a whole, and Table 1 shows the proportion of vagrancy prosecutions to the 'total non-indictable offences determined summarily' - that is, petty crimes tried in the police courts, without a jury - in Ireland and in the four provinces, 1866-1914.[11] Because prostitution (which came under the heading of 'vagrancy' offences) deserves to be treated separately by the historian, I have taken the prostitution figures out of the reckoning.[12]

TABLE 1: PROPORTION OF VAGRANCY PROSECUTIONS (EXCLUDING PROSTITUTION) TO TOTAL NON-INDICTABLE OFFENCES DETERMINED SUMMARILY (i.e. PETTY CRIMES TRIED IN POLICE COURTS) IRELAND 1866-1914.

| YEAR | IRELAND | LEINSTER | MUNSTER | ULSTER | CONNACHT |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1866 | .77 | 1.05 | .7 | .5 | .4 |
| 1867 | .86 | 1.5 | .7 | .37 | .32 |
| 1868 | .87 | 1.5 | .5 | .5 | .34 |
| 1869 | .67 | .79 | .5 | .5 | .35 |
| 1870 | .88 | 1.3 | .7 | .5 | .35 |
| 1871 | .68 | 1 | .67 | .47 | .64 |
| 1872 | .86 | 1.3 | .87 | .82 | .38 |
| 1873 | .7 | 1.2 | .6 | .7 | .4 |
| 1874 | .79 | 1 | .8 | .57 | .46 |
| 1875 | 1.1 | 1.4 | 1 | .94 | 1 |
| 1876 | .9 | 1.2 | .8 | .79 | .66 |
| 1877 | .88 | 1 | .8 | .7 | .5 |
| 1878 | .99 | 1.3 | .97 | .77 | .62 |
| 1879 | 1.3 | 1.6 | 1.3 | .97 | 1 |
| 1880 | 1.3 | 1.7 | 1.1 | .95 | 1.2 |
| 1881 | 1.3 | 1.6 | 1.1 | 1.3 | .7 |
| 1882 | 1.4 | 1.6 | 1.3 | 1.5 | 1.1 |
| 1883 | 1.1 | 1.7 | .7 | 1 | .8 |
| 1884 | 1.2 | 1.8 | .7 | 1.1 | .5 |
| 1885 | 1.3 | 1.9 | .9 | 1.2 | .9 |
| 1886 | 1.7 | 2.4 | 1.1 | 1 | 1.4 |
| 1887 | 1.6 | 2.3 | 1.1 | 1.3 | .96 |
| 1888 | 1.6 | 2.2 | 1.3 | 1.3 | 1 |
| 1889 | 1.7 | 2.3 | 1.5 | 1.3 | 1.7 |
| 1890 | 1.5 | 1.9 | 1 | 1 | .8 |
| 1891 | 1.4 | 1.8 | 1 | 1.4 | .75 |
| 1892 | 1.4 | 1.9 | .86 | 1.6 | .86 |
| 1893 | 1.5 | 2 | 1 | 1.6 | .9 |
| 1894 | 1.6 | 2.2 | .9 | 1.7 | .7 |
| 1895 | 1.3 | 2.1 | .9 | 1.2 | .7 |
| 1896 | 1.4 | 2.3 | .9 | 1.3 | .8 |
| 1897 | 1.3 | 1.8 | 1.1 | 1.1 | .5 |
| 1898 | 1.2 | 1.9 | .8 | 1.1 | .5 |
| 1899 | 1.1 | 1.6 | .75 | 1.2 | .5 |
| 1900 | 1.2 | 1.9 | .8 | 1.1 | .4 |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1901 | 1.4 | 2.2 | .9 | 1.1 | .7 |
| 1902 | 1.3 | 2 | .8 | 1.1 | .6 |
| 1903 | 1.4 | 2.3 | .8 | 1.4 | .7 |
| 1904 | 1.7 | 2.6 | 1.1 | 1.7 | .6 |
| 1905 | 1.8 | 2.7 | 1.3 | 1.6 | .6 |
| 1906 | 1.7 | 2.7 | 1.3 | 1.5 | .5 |
| 1907 | 1.6 | 2.6 | 1 | 1.4 | .7 |
| 1908 | 1.5 | 2.5 | .9 | 1.4 | .4 |
| 1909 | 1.5 | 2.1 | 1.1 | 1.8 | .5 |
| 1910 | 1.5 | 2.3 | .9 | 1.8 | .4 |
| 1911 | 1.4 | 2.2 | .9 | 1.6 | .3 |
| 1912 | 1.4 | 2.3 | 1.1 | 1.8 | .4 |
| 1913 | 1.4 | 2 | .9 | 1.7 | .4 |
| 1914 | 1.5 | 2 | .9 | 1.8 | .5 |

On first glancing at this table one is tempted to think that vagrancy offences were a small and insignificant phenomenon, hardly worthy of the historian's regard. However, the actual numbers of prosecutions per year were by no means negligible, rising throughout this period, from 1835, in 1866, 2648 in 1883, to 3399 ten years later, and falling, though not to 1860s levels in the early years of the century (e.g. 2829 in 1903). These numbers do not refer to actual people - the same person could be prosecuted three or four times in the one year. The same is true of the figures relating to 'night-lodgers' in workhouses in Table 2. These represent what the tourist industry would call 'bed-nights' rather than numbers of individuals, but the overall impression is of a rise in the demand for and/or supply of, casual night-lodger beds.[13]

TABLE 2: Admissions of night-lodgers to Irish workhouses: annual total of admissions for the first week of every month, every ten years 1870-1 to 1910-11.

| YEAR | MALE | FEMALE | TOTAL |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1870-1 | 11,610 | 3222 | 14,832 |
| 1880-1 | 31,237 | 7822 | 39,059 |
| 1890-1 | 27,261 | 7057 | 34,318 |
| 1900-1 | 30,115 | 8146 | 38,261 |
| 1910-1 | 49,595 | 10,800 | 60,395 |

Police and Poor Law officials were grappling, each in their own way, with the wandering homeless. The workhouse or Union was designed specifically as 'indoor relief' for people normally resident in the catchment area of the Union - the idea behind the workhouse test was that it would deter idlers and apparent scroungers from seeking relief, and it was never intended as a way-station or

stopping-off point for people on the road. As already mentioned the Poor Relief Extension Act of 1847 had made it an offence to go from one Union to another seeking relief. However, people on the road genuinely seeking relief were such a recognisable social problem that the facility 'night-lodger' was introduced into Irish workhouses in 1862. This was paralleled in Britain by the institution of the 'casual wards' but the latter were purpose built, and even grimmer than the main body of the workhouse, with a stringently-applied 'worktest' in the morning, whereby the casual lodger would have to break stones or perform some other task as 'payment' for his lodging. George Orwell gives a very vivid and bleak description of casual wards in 'spikes' in 1933.[14] In Ireland, night-lodgers seem to have been admitted to the main body of the workhouse, though they were enumerated separately. Taking together, Tables 1 and 2 indicate that there were increasing numbers of people on the move, and that the official response to this was two-pronged - greater vigilance on the part of the police, greater sympathy on the part of the relieving officers in workhouses. This seems to be a contradictory state of affairs precisely because it was contradictory; governments were never quite sure whether repression or relief was the adequate response to the problem of wandering homelessness. Table 2 also shows that men were in the majority among night-lodgers; prosecutions of men for vagrancy far exceeded prosecutions of women. Institutions, voluntary and statutory, were far more likely to give aid to destitute women than men, and/or to keep destitute women incarcerated in workhouse, hostel, or asylum.[15] Most people on the move who were defined as vagrants, seem to have been men. Looking again at the judicial statistics, it can be seen that Lenister had consistently the highest proportion of vagrancy prosecutions (never falling below 1% of all petty offences tried in the police courts,) most of which were accounted for by the Dublin Metropolitan Area. Ulster came next - mainly Belfast; Munster, mainly Cork city, and Connacht had consistently the lowest of all. However, Meath, Kilkenny, Tipperary South Riding, Tyrone, and Limerick had consistently high numbers of vagrancy prosecutions also. Mayo, Sligo, Roscommon rarely feature, while Galway East and Kerry occasionally have the highest vagrancy prosecutions outside of the cities. It was, therefore, in the cities and the rich agricultural regions that police were most likely to apprehend homeless people as vagrants. The second fact which can be gleaned from Table 1 is that there was a proportionate increase in vagrancy prosecutions, roughly from 1875, and while this might not have been steady, or evenly spread over all regions up to 1914, prosecutions never fell to pre-1875 levels. Numbers of 'night-lodger' bed-nights also rose steadily from the 1870s.

In Galway the patterns of vagrancy and night-lodger relief in this period both reflected national trends and deviated from them. First of all, as the 1847 Act would suggest, the numbers of wandering homeless were quite large in the Famine and immediate post-Famine years. Galway gaol had, in the early 1850s,

an abnormally high proportion of committals to gaol for vagrancy - 44% of committals to Galway county gaol in 1852 were for vagrancy. The comparable figure in Clonmel gaol was 25% (July-Dec 1852), in Cork county gaol, in 1853, 20%. In all of these gaols, but particularly in Galway, a very high proportion of those committed for vagrancy were 15 years of age and younger - e.g. over a third, in January 1852. They often seem to have been groups of youths arrested on the same day - it was probably the group that posed the threat to public order - but there were also girls and young women, and men in their 20s.[16] These large numbers are no doubt due to immediate post-Famine dislocation and homelessness, as well as the last gaoling of 'criminal' youth before the Reformatories Act of 1858, and its successor, the Industrial Schools Act 1868, would place criminals under 16 in special institutions.[17] In 1852 in Galway gaol the winter months saw the highest proportion of vagrancy committals. However, only 3 years later in 1855, the proportion of vagrants to the total sent to this gaol in this year had fallen to 5.8% and this was not because the number of other offences rose significantly. In 1859, 10% of those who were committed to gaol were sent there for vagrancy offences, 5% in 1861, nearly 7% in 1864. What can explain these fluctuations? The dramatic fall 1852-55 could be explained by the relaxation of police activity - and of those who complained to the police, as we must remember that the police were often acting on complaints from the general public - as agricultural and other recovery took place. The rise 1859-64 could be accounted for by the bad economic conditions of these years - a succession of very bad summers and wet winters, but a closer look at the gaol registers shows us that the kind of vagrant locked up 1859-64 was different to the legions of teenagers we encountered in 1852. In 1859-64 there were a greater number of men and women over 40, several obvious recidivists, e.g. one Mary Anne Murphy, whose age was given as 98, who served a 24-hour sentence in June 1859, seven days hard labour in July of the same year, and a month's imprisonment in October. In 1861, Anne Morriston, (35) got one month in August, and was barely out again when she was sentenced to another month, from September. What did a magistrate mean by sentencing a woman of 98 to hard labour? This kind of sentencing was not confined to Galway - blindness, extreme old age and other incapacitations were no protection for people prosecuted for vagrancy in other parts of the country either, e.g. a 96-year-old man from New Ross who was sent to Athy gaol in 1859, along with a blind man of 25 (from Tipperary); an 80-year-old hunchback was imprisoned for vagrancy in Cork county gaol in 1862 - examples can be multiplied.[18] Perhaps, instead of being shocked at what we see to be the inhumanity of police and magistrates in these instances, we should be marvelling at the agility, resourcefulness and longevity of these supposedly incapacitated people whose existence could pose sufficient annoyance to public order for them to be locked up. It is also likely that they were sent to gaol because they refused to go to the workhouse, as

relieving officers would seldom turn away anybody who was very old, or disabled; these were, after all, the traditional 'deserving poor'. However even the older vagrants in 1859-64 in Galway gaol, seem to have been prosecuted in groups - along with the 98-year-old Mary Anne Murphy in June 1859 were an 80-year-old woman, 4 women in their 40s and 50s, one of whom was accompanied by a child, and 2 men of similar age. Mothers and children were often imprisoned together; in April 1859 a woman of 32 and her sons aged 3, 2 and 1 all served a 7-day sentence in Galway gaol for vagrancy. This was quite common all over the country. We might blanch in horror at small children and babies being sent to gaol with their mothers, but if these women had gone to the workhouse, their children, except for babies they were actually nursing, would have been taken from them and lodged separately. In later years, children seen to be under the guardianship of criminals - vagrant mothers and fathers sometimes, though not always, came into this category - could be removed from these parents and placed in Industrial Schools.

The typical vagrants in Galway in the 1850s and early 1860s were, therefore, crowds of youths in the immediate post-Famine years, and in the late 1850s and 1860s, people over 40, and young mothers with children - the traditional 'deserving poor'. When the Poor Law Commissioners solicited reports on the state of vagrancy throughout the country in 1856, the inspectors who sent in reports from all over the country named these two kinds of people on the move - disabled beggars, and young mothers with children. The disabled beggars, or *bacaigh* as they are known in the folk tradition, were seen by these inspectors to be at best, professional mendicants tastelessly and unscrupulously exploiting a disability for all it was worth, and at worst, fakes. The report from Galway in 1856 noted that 'professional mendicancy' still prevailed in the rural districts but that it had 'abated considerably' since the Famine; it was strongly recommended that the constabulary be employed to enforce the vagrancy act more vigorously.[19] Contemporary folklorists and antiquarians were fascinated by *bacaigh*, publishing articles about them in learned journals and suggesting that they were a highly-organized trade who held an AGM every year in Baile Bhúirne, Co Cork.[20] People who were asked to contribute to the Irish Folklore Commission in the 1930s, 40s and 50s certainly remember disabled wandering beggars, with varying degrees of warmth;[21] the *Seanchas Amhlaoibh Uí Luinse* has many stories about, e.g. the tramp who moved in and stayed for two weeks the two tramps who could not abide each other, and other archetypal stories.[22]

Trying to count the number of people on the move in any given area at any given time is an almost impossible task which involves close attention to official perceptions and descriptions as well as to the numbers which are in front of us. We are relying on scraps of evidence which often seem mutually contradictory. In 1863, e.g., the police throughout the country were required to give numbers of 'suspected persons' in their localities, and up to 1866, 'tramps and vagrants', as

they were called, were counted as a separate category within this. In 1866 the judicial statistics noted that there had been such a decline in the numbers of 'tramps and vagrants' that they would not be separately enumerated any more, much to the researcher's chagrin. However the figures in 1863 and in 1866 show that Galway East Riding had the highest proportion of 'tramps and vagrants' in Ireland to the total numbers of those known to the police in 1866, and the second highest in 1863 (County Kilkenny had the highest).[23] Was this because Galway E.R. had such a comparatively small number of people 'known to the police' that 'tramps and vagrants' made up most of them? This does not seem to have been the case. In any event, they might have been 'known to the police' but the latter do not seem to have prosecuted with the kind of vigour that had been recommended by the Inspectors in 1856, judging by the small number of vagrancy prosecutions in Connacht. Are the police referring here to the antecedents of the Travelling People? This does not seem to have been so. Complete families of travelling traders or craftsmen were never identified as a public order problem by the police or the poor law authorities in this period, as far as I can make out. In the first place, these people, while they certainly begged to supplement their income, were not wandering abroad without visible means of support - they had transport, tools of a trade or the wherewithal to trade, and most importantly of all, the travelling man was seen to be supporting his wife and family.[24] Able-bodied males wandering abroad were objects of suspicion because it was suspected that they were deserting wives and children, leaving them to become a burden on the rates elsewhere. (This was a survival strategy of the very poor, particularly up to the Famine and residually after it - the man would go away to try to earn money to bring home, leaving the wife and family unsupported in his absence.) Besides, the trades and services provided by Travelling People seem to have been in genuine demand in many rural areas up to the 1930s. It is quite likely that individual travellers were prosecuted for vagrancy or relieved as night-lodgers in workhouses, though looking at the gaol registers for the 1870s, 1880s, and 1890s, when many tradesmen and craftsmen were imprisoned for vagrancy, the kind of trades they practised are not necessarily Travellers' trades, as we shall see, and the people themselves usually had a fixed place of origin, even if they had no fixed abode. (Then again, Travellers often have a fixed place of origin also, and our modern ideas about what are, and are not, Travellers' trades, might be anachronistically narrow.) This entire area needs more research - it could be that what we consider to be the wide cultural gulf between Travellers and settled people did not really come into being until after the first generation of compulsory education. However, people on the move who were subject to police attention and considered a problem by the Poor Law in the years 1850-1914, were, increasingly, unaccompanied men in their 20s. These people accounted for the rise in the numbers prosecuted for vagrancy from the mid-1870s. The gaol registers of

Castlebar, Cork and Clonmel show that nearly all the vagrants committed to gaol in these last decades of the 19th century were labourers or artisans - printers, corkcutters, barbers, tailors, rag-gatherers, sawyers, carpenters, piano-tuners, coachbuilders, are only some of the trades represented.[25] The full impact of the railways and their contribution to the development of the retail trade began to be felt from the mid-1870s, and accelerated in the succeeding decades as light railways were feverishly built to the most remote parts of the country. Cheap, mass-produced goods would have reduced the demand for craftsmen while the availability of transport would have reduced dependence on journeymen who were already competing in an over-stocked skilled-labour market.[26] All of the tradesmen, artisans and labourers who feature in the gaol registers in these years were prosecuted for begging, sleeping out, wandering abroad without visible means of support. The 1871 vagrancy legislation had strengthened police powers considerably as well as extending the definition of vagrant to include people found possessing picklocks or other instruments of burglary, fortune tellers and gamblers. The act not only reinforced the criminality of wandering destitution itself, but put people without money and homes into the same category as housebreakers. It was only once, in the Judicial Statistics for the entire period, that I came across somebody prosecuted for 'possessing picklocks.'

In Galway city Union workhouse in 1874, for the 30 weeks looked at, there was an average of 3 (2.8) night-lodgers per week in the workhouse. In 1894 this had risen to 18, it had fallen again, but not to 1874 levels, in 1912, to 7.[27] Vagrancy prosecutions also rose, as can be seen from Table 3, though they seem to have started rising earlier, in the 1870s, and started to fall from the turn of the century.

TABLE 3: Prosecutions for vagrancy offences (excluding prostitution) in Galway, 1867-1914.

| YEAR | GALWAY E.R | GALWAY W.R. | CITY |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1867 | 15 | 9 | 28 |
| 1868 | 11 | 14 | 23 |
| 1869 | 15 | - | 14 |
| 1870 | 22 | - | 13 |
| 1871 | 20 | 108 | - |
| 1872 | 28 | 12 | 23 |
| 1873 | 6 | 5 | 56 |
| 1874 | 3 | 19 | 38 |
| 1875 | 50 | 22 | 63 |
| 1876 | 44 | 38 | 21 |
| 1877 | 188 | 15 | 35 |
| 1878 | 25 | 38 | 36 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1879 | 52 | 42 | 83 |
| 1880 | 44 | 76 | 64 |
| 1881 | 29 | 65 | 12 |
| 1882 | 34 | 37 | 20 |
| 1883 | 31 | 41 | 37 |
| 1884 | 26 | 17 | 3 |
| 1885 | 56 | 43 | 22 |
| 1886 | 21 | 47 | 25 |
| 1887 | 25 | 59 | 23 |
| 1888 | 26 | 39 | 36 |
| 1889 | 37 | 89 | 76 |
| 1890 | 26 | 30 | 23 |
| 1891 | 32 | 25 | 16 |
| 1892 | 33 | 29 | 20 |
| 1893 | 26 | 31 | 35 |
| 1894 | 32 | 33 | 34 |
| 1895 | 12 | 19 | 21 |
| 1896 | 38 | 32 | 17 |
| 1897 | 42 | 21 | 10 |
| 1898 | 25 | 20 | 36 |
| 1899 | 35 | 15 | 30 |
| 1900 | 22 | 37 | |
| 1901 | 18 | 37 | |
| 1902 | 12 | 26 | |
| 1903 | 16 | 17 | |
| 1904 | 22 | 35 | |
| 1905 | 25 | 19 | |
| 1906 | 7 | 34 | |
| 1907 | 12 | 36 | |
| 1908 | 22 | 35 | |
| 1909 | 23 | 61 | |
| 1910 | 7 | 43 | |
| 1911 | 15 | 22 | |
| 1912 | 9 | 33 | |
| 1913 | 10 | 21 | |
| 1914 | 20 | 18 | |

(NOTE: After 1900, Galway city was included with Galway West Riding in the Judicial Statistics.)

The fact that homeless people could be either arrested for vagrancy or put up in the workhouse tempts us to ask - what was it about these people which made the police decide that they were a threat to public order? Were they abusive to the police, did they extort money with threats, were they hopelessly drunk and disturbing the peace? These were all offences for which people could have been, and were, prosecuted, however, so we must conclude that those locked up for vagrancy were locked up simply for wandering abroad without visible means of support, and other vagrancy behaviours. Were they people whose appearance or demeanour did not conform to certain standards? Most vagrants from the 1880s in the gaols mentioned above, were able to read and write, so they might have had some contact with the same cultural world as their non-vagrant fellows. However it could be that there was something about them that did not conform to ever-rising standards of acceptability and respectability. A doctor from the west of Ireland who responded to the *Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-minded* in 1908 pointed out that even people genuinely seeking work were not always 'respectable'.[28] In the 1850s and 1860s the only criterion for respectability for poor people travelling from place to place was willingness and ability to work. Year after year the Poor Law commissioners warned relieving officers not to turn away 'genuine wayfarers' - 'some of the most fitting objects of public charity', as one report called them - in their zeal to enforce the letter of the Poor Law.[29] The *DMP Instruction Book* of 1865 advised police to direct obvious loiterers with no place to go, to the nearest workhouse, instead of jumping to the conclusion that they were idlers.[30] From the late 1870s willingness to work was no longer enough to keep the man on the move out of prison. One of the reasons for this might have been the decline in seasonal migration due to agricultural changes and mechanization. Seasonal migration to parts of Ireland, England and Scotland persisted up to the 1940s, but the numbers were very small compared to the hundreds of thousands who went every year up to the 1870s. Worldwide agricultural change and mechanization caused a decline in the amount of work available, and, as Cormac Ó Gráda tells us, seasonal migration with a regular timetable and a regular destination, in recognizable squads or groups of ten or twenty, gave way to longer and more irregular periods of temporary migration singly or in pairs, on the trail of navvying work and whatever agricultural work could be had.[31] When the numbers of tradesmen out of work due to the rise of mass production and mass marketing, are added to this, it can be seen that the government faced an immense public order problem which could only be managed by branding some of these people, at least, as criminal.

Galway county or city do not seem to have been magnets for people on the move, or sufficiently far on the route to anywhere work could be had for large numbers to be a visible problem. However, it is significant that Galway East Riding with its thriving towns (Loughrea, Ballinasloe) and big farmers, had

consistently high rates of vagrancy prosecutions, as well as a high proportion of tramps and vagrants 'known to the police' in the 1860s. Vagrancy prosecutions were always high in prosperous agricultural areas where there would have been sharpening social tensions in the latter years of the nineteenth century as farmers employed less labour and assimilated smaller holdings into 'grass farms'. As already mentioned, Cork East Riding, Tipperary South Riding, Kerry and Clare had, next to the cities, consistently the highest rate of vagrancy prosecutions in these years. Most of the young male vagrants committed to Cork county gaol in the 1880s, 1890s and the first decade of this century, had been arrested in Kanturk. Kanturk was not only one of the main hiring fairs which acted as a magnet to labourers all over Munster, it was also, according to Donnelly, the site of a short-lived labourers' union in the 1870s.[32] This is not to say that small farmers and unemployed labourers would necessarily have been locked up as vagrants, but that the atmosphere of social tension would have led to the more ready identification of 'strangers' as objects of suspicion, and greater vigilance by the police. As far as the actual numbers for Galway city and county are concerned, these follow the national pattern, though not inevitably; in 1877, 188 people were prosecuted as vagrants in Galway East Riding, the previous year it had been 44, the following year, 25; in Galway city in 1879, 83 people were prosecuted as vagrants, compared to 36 the previous year and 64 the following year.[33] This might have had something to do with the smallpox scare mentioned by Dr. Murray, or more likely, just the general influx of destitute people into the city in bad times. Sometimes the numbers suggest fruitful avenues for more detailed locally-based research; why were 108 people prosecuted as vagrants from Galway West Riding in 1871, where there had been no prosecutions for two years previously, and only 12 in the following year? Were police applying the new legislation with great zeal, was there some great cause of tension in this part of Galway in this year, or was it simply that a great collection of 'strangers' decided to take up temporary, if airy, residence in west Galway in 1871? Numbers prosecuted in the city fluctuated wildly. One thing is clear however. From the little we can gather from tables of persons known to the police, and contemporary accounts, it would seem that the major move against vagrants took place in the towns - Loughrea, Ballinasloe, Tuam, Gort and the city itself. Connemara does not seem to feature at all. This was either because the kind of people who were on the move through Connemara were so accepted and valued by the Connemara people that they would not have complained about them, or because people on the move through Connemara were just beginning their eastward journeys, going at regular, recognisable times of the year to farmers in England and Scotland. The same could apply to the other Connacht counties.

Homeless people from Galway, as distinct from homeless people in Galway, must be sought in other parts of the country. A few examples suffice to suggest where some Galway people went and what became of them. A 19-year-old

Galway man of no fixed address was arrested in Kanturk in 1883 and got one month's hard labour; a 60-year-old Galway-born sailor of no fixed place of residence got a month in Cork gaol in 1892; a 38-year-old Galway fireman, same story, October 1895. Galway people sometimes went north and west as well as south; a 40-year-old Galway born man of no fixed residence got 14 days in Castlebar gaol in October 1892 for 'obtaining relief in Ballina Union under the pretence of looking for work'. In 1894 a 45-year-old Tuam shoemaker was locked up in Castlebar; it was noted of him under distinguishing features: 'pretends to be deaf'. Was this shoemaker the last of a dying breed of *bacaigh*? In Clonmel 1909 a 27-year-old Galway labourer of no fixed place of residence served time for vagrancy; his next-of-kin was 'mother in Ballinasloe asylum'. Not all vagrants mentioned a next-of-kin, but many did, in this gaol in 1909, which suggests that they were not completely adrift in the world.[34] These very small collections of facts spark all kinds of questions; how did the relieving officer in Ballina know that the 40-year-old Galway man was only pretending to look for work? The man whose mother was in Ballinasloe asylum - had he stayed at home to look after her, the youngest of a large family, until he could do so no more? Or was he the illegitimate son of somebody Gerald O'Donovan would have called a 'bad woman'? How did they know that the Tuam shoemaker was pretending to be deaf? Presumably because he was 'known to the police'. Turning to the 'poor relief' rather than the 'punishment' swing of the pendulum, a 66-year-old labourer who gave Ballinasloe as his place of birth, and was able to read and write, was given a night's lodging in Thurles workhouse in late July 1893.[35] Further research could yield equally detailed information about those who used Galway workhouse in the same period. Looking at the fortnightly reports, all that can be made out is that men were in a clear majority, and that they were highest in number in the 1880s and 1890s. Alarm or displeasure at the influx of vagrants was never expressed in the Guardians' meetings, in the years I looked at, nor was there any such complaint in the local newspapers in the 1870s and early 1880s. More thorough research is needed, but a cursory glance at national newspapers and at some other local newspapers in this period did not reveal any complaints about vagrants, either. There is always the possibility that there were few complaints voiced at this stage precisely because the nets of punishment and poor relief were catching most of those whom they were meant to catch. The fact that wandering homelessness, with all its privations, health risks and rootlessness, was no longer considered an acceptable way of life can be looked at as 'progress'; the vigour with which able-bodied men, in particular, were prosecuted, forced to lodge in the workhouse, and otherwise branded as marginal and outcast, reminds us that progress always has its casualties.

The homelessness of the post-Famine period in Ireland can be divided into two phases; the traditional homelessness of the long-established mendicant poor, some considered deserving, some not (the very young, the very old, mothers-

with-children, the disabled), giving way in the 1870s and 1880s to the able-bodied adult, almost invariably male, labourer/artisan going increasingly long distances in search of increasingly scarce work and subsistence. Galway certainly experienced both phases, the first, reinforced by the dislocation of the Famine, much more acutely than the second, mainly because many people on the move seem to have passed Galway by. The Galway individuals without families, work or land to root them, could turn up anywhere. A 55-year-old labourer originally from Portumna, a Roman Catholic, who could read and write, was admitted to Thurles workhouse on August 1 1923 and died in that workhouse the following February.[36] Were his people told of it? Did he have any people to tell? Would he have wanted them to know? Was he an 'idle and disorderly person', an 'incorrigible rogue' or 'one of the most fitting objects of public charity'? Throughout his life he might have been defined as all of these things, but he still defined himself as a labourer and no doubt it was this self-definition which kept him on the road long after any possibility of finding work had faded.

NOTES

1 John F. Ryan, 'Gerald O'Donovan: Priest, Novelist and Irish Revivalist' *JGAHS* Vol. 48 (1996), pp.1-57; p.32.

2 Dr. James P. Murray, *Galway: A Medico-Social History* (Galway n.d. c.1993) p.107.

3 Information on the vagrancy acts is taken from the following sources: James O'Connor, *The Irish Justice of the Peace* (Dublin 1911), pp.385, 531, 830-1, 1235. On the Poor Law and 1847, see Sir George Nicholls, *A History of the Irish Poor Law* (London 1856), pp.330-2; Helen Burke, *The People and the Poor Law in Nineteenth-century Ireland* (Dublin 1987).

4 On the historical background, A.L. Beier, *Masterless Men: the Vagrancy Problem in England 1560-1640* (London 1985); Bronislaw Geremek, 'Criminalité, Vagabondage et Pauperisme a l'Aube des Temps Moderne' *Revue d'Histoire Moderne et Contemporaine* 2 (1974), pp. 337-75; Louis Chevalier, *Classes Laborieuses et Classes Dangereuses a Paris Pendant XIX siecle* (Paris 1958); Olwen Hufton, *The Poor of Eighteenth-century France* (Oxford 1974); H.Lis & G.Soly, *Poverty and Capitalism in Pre-Industrial Europe* (Brighton 1982); Stuart Woolf, *The Poor in Western Europe in the 18th and 19th centuries* (London 1986); C. Romon, 'Le Monde des Pauvres a Paris au XVIIIe siecle' *Annales: Economies, Societes, Civilisations* 37 (1982), pp.729-63.

5 The latest authority on Irish economic and social history is Cormac O Gráda, *Ireland: a New Economic History* (Oxford 1995); see also L.Cullen (ed.) *The Formation of the Irish Economy* (Cork 1976), and *An Economic History of Ireland Since 1660* (London 1972); P.J. Drudy (ed.) *Irish Studies 2: Land Politics and People* (Cambridge 1982); J.J. Lee, *The Modernisation of Irish Society 1948-1918* (Dublin 1973).

6 S. Clark & J. Donnelly (eds.) *Irish Peasants: Violence and Political Unrest* (Manchester 1983).

7 Mary E. Daly, *Social and Economic History of Ireland Since 1800* (Dublin 1981), p.101.

8 *Report of Special Commission on Vagrancy 1906* (cd.2852, 2891, 2892)CIII. Appendix XIV refers to Ireland; *Report of Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-minded* 1908 (cd.4202).

9 On 'degeneracy theory' and its impact on social thought in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, see Daniel Pick, *Faces of Degeneration: a European Disorder 1848-1918* (Cambridge 1989); Anthony Wohl, *The Eternal Slum* (London 1981); Gareth Stedman Jones, *Outcast London* (London 1976).

10 Cormac Ó Gráda (1995).

11 *Judicial Statistics (Ireland)* 1866-1914, Returns of Persons Proceeded Against for Offences Determined Summarily, variously Tables 9, 7, 16.

12 Maria Luddy, 'Prostitution and Rescue Work in Nineteenth-century Ireland' in M. Luddy & C. Murphy (eds.) *Women Surviving: Studies in Irish Women's History in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Dublin 1990), pp.51-84. 'On prostitution in Britain', J. Walkowitz, *Prostitution and Victorian Society: women, class and the state* (Cambridge 1980).

13 *Annual Reports of the Local Government Board (Ireland)*, 1870-1, 1880-1, 1890-1, 1990-1, 1910-11, returns of night-lodgers relieved in the workhouses of Ireland.

14 On vagrancy in 19th-century Britain (specifically England), see D.J.V. Jones, *Crime, Protest, Community and Police in 19th-century Britain* (London 1982), Chapter 7, and passim; Rachel Vorspan, 'Vagrancy and the New Poor Law in late Victorian and Edwardian England' *English Historical Review* 92 (1977), pp. 59-81.

15 Maria Luddy, *Women and Philanthropy in Nineteenth-century Ireland* (Cambridge 1994); Caitriona Clear, *Nuns in Nineteenth-century Ireland* (Dublin 1987).

16 Gaol registers for Galway, Clonmel, and county Cork, National Archives, Dublin. These and the other extant registers for other gaols contain varying degrees of detail on persons committed to gaol.

17 Helen Burke, op.cit; J. Robins, *The Lost Children: a study of charity children in Ireland 1700-1900* (Dublin 1980, pp.148-78; Jane Barnes, Irish Industrial Schools 1868-1908 (Dublin 1989).

18 Gaol registers, National Archives.

19 *Report of Irish Poor Law Commissioners (1856)*, pp.50-9.

20. W. Hackett, 'The Irish Bacach, or Professional Beggar, viewed archeologically' *Ulster Journal of Archaeology* 9 ((1861-2), 255-71; G. Murphy, 'Bacaigh Baile Mhúirne' *Eigse* 3 (1941), pp.101-2.

21 Mss of the Irish Folklore Commission/Coimisiúin Béaloideasa Eireann, in University College Dublin and on microfilm; Iml. 686, pp. 525-6, p. 578; Iml. 1432, pp. 327-8.

22 Seán O Cróinín, *Seanchas Amhlaoibh Uí Luinse* (Baile Atha Cliath 1980), p.134, passim.

23 *Judicial Statistics Ireland (1863)* 1864 (3418) LVII, Table 4, pp.6-10; *Judicial Statistics Ireland (1866)* 1867 (3930) LXVI, pp.9-10: 'Returns of Numbers of Known Depredators, Offenders and Suspected Persons at large within the Jurisdiction of each Police District in Ireland in the month of December 1863 /1866 and the houses which they frequent.'

24 There is a serious dearth of research on the Travelling People; the following are useful. P. Mac Gréine, 'Irish 'tinkers' or travellers' *Béaloideas III* (1931-2), pp.170-86; S. MacEinrí 'Ceant agus Saol na dTincéirí' *Béaloideas IX* (1939), pp. 219-29; Coimisiúin Béaloideasa Eireann/Irish Folklore Commission mss. Iml. 1436, pp.3-39, Iml. 688, p.141; J. Gow, 'The Irish Tinkers' *Ulster Folklife* 17 (1971); S. O Cathain, *Irish Life and Lore* (Cork 1982), pp.76-89; Sean Maher, *The Road to God Knows Where* (Dublin 1972); A. Court, A. MacWeeney & T. Munnelly, *Puck of the Droms: the lives and literature of the Irish Tinkers* (Berkeley 1985); Nan Joyce with Anna Farmar Traveller (Dublin 1985): Mary O'Malley, 'Emigration of Irish Travellers' in Galway Labour History Group, *The Emigrant Experience* (Galway 1991).

25 Gaol registers, National Archives.

26 See the general historical works cited in note 5; on nineteenth-century trades in particular, see Maura Cronin, *Country, Class or Craft? The trades in 19th-century Cork* (Cork 1994).

27 The fortnightly meetings and reports of Galway city Union workhouse and Board of Guardians are to be found in Galway County Reference Library, Island House, Cathedral Square, Galway.

28 *Royal Commission on Feeble-minded.*, p.764-8.

29 See, e.g. *Reports and Communications on Vagrancy 1847-8* PP (987), LIII; *Report of Irish Poor Law Commissioners 1856*, p.14;

30 Inspector John Ward, *Instruction Book for the Dublin Metropolitan Police* (Dublin 1865), p.148.

31 The best historical account of seasonal migration remains Cormac O Gráda, 'Seasonal Migration and Post-Famine Adjustment in the West of Ireland' *Studia Hibernica* 13 (1973); see also Anne O'Dowd, *Spalpeens and Tattie-Hokers: History and Folklore of the Irish Migratory Agricultural Worker in Ireland and Britain* (Dublin 1991), and 'Rabbles and Runaways' in A. Gailey & D. O hOgain (eds.) *Gold Under the Furze: essays presented to Caoimhim O Danachair* (Dublin 1982).

32 Gaol registers, National Archives; James S. Donnelly Jr, *The Land and People of Nineteenth-century Cork* (London 1975), pp.236-8.

33 Judicial Statistics (Ireland) 1866-1914.

34 Gaol registers, National Archives.

35 Indoor Register, Thurles Union, consulted in Tipperary County Library, Thurles, in March/April 1985, by kind permission of the librarian and co-operation of Dr. Chris O'Mahony, Mid-West Regional Archivist.

36 Indoor Register, Thurles Union.

# A SURVEY OF THE STANDING STONE COMPLEX AT KILLADANGAN, COUNTY MAYO

CHRISTIAAN CORLETT

This paper provides a detailed survey of a standing stone complex located in the townland of Killadangan (*Coill an daingean*, i.e., 'Wood of the fortress') in south-west county Mayo. The complex consists of a stone row, a stone pair, three isolated standing stones, a probable stone circle, two enigmatic mounds, foundations of a stone wall, and a large earthen enclosure. Previous published research has only made brief reference to the site: de Valera and Ó Nualláin (1964), McNally (1984), Ó Nualláin (1995) and Corlett (1996 & 1997b). The site was initially described by the writer in 1994 (*ibid.* 1995), and was revisited by the writer during 1997 as part of work being carried out for the Archaeological Survey for county Mayo, on behalf of the Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands.

## LOCATION

The Killadangan complex (fig. 1) is located in a salt marsh on the southern shores of Clew Bay, immediately NW of a rather bad bend in the Westport-Louisburgh road (just over 5km SW of Westport). Croagh Patrick forms a dramatic backdrop to the west, and across Clew Bay to the north the Nephin Beg Range of mountains, and Nephin mountain itself, loom in the distance.

The site is marked on the 1901 and 1919 edition OS 6" maps, sheet 87, as 'Cromlech' and 'Standing Stone (site of)'. A large hachured oval enclosure is also shown. The site is first marked on the 1838 OS 6" map (fig. 2), which includes a circle of stones, and the large enclosure appears to have been better defined. The placename 'Gortbraud' is indicated on the 1838, 1901 and 1919 OS 6" maps. The name may originate from the Irish *Gort Brád/Braghad*, i.e., 'field of the throat or gorge'. The reference to part of the anatomy in an Irish placename usually has a topographical analogy, and the translation of *Braghad* as 'throat' is probably a topographical reference to a 'gorge'. However, neither translation has an obvious connection with the topography of the area which is very much low-lying and coastal, and the word 'braud' awaits a more convincing interpretation. An arm of land extending to the north of the site, projecting into Clew Bay, is called Annagh (*Eanach*, i.e., 'Marsh').

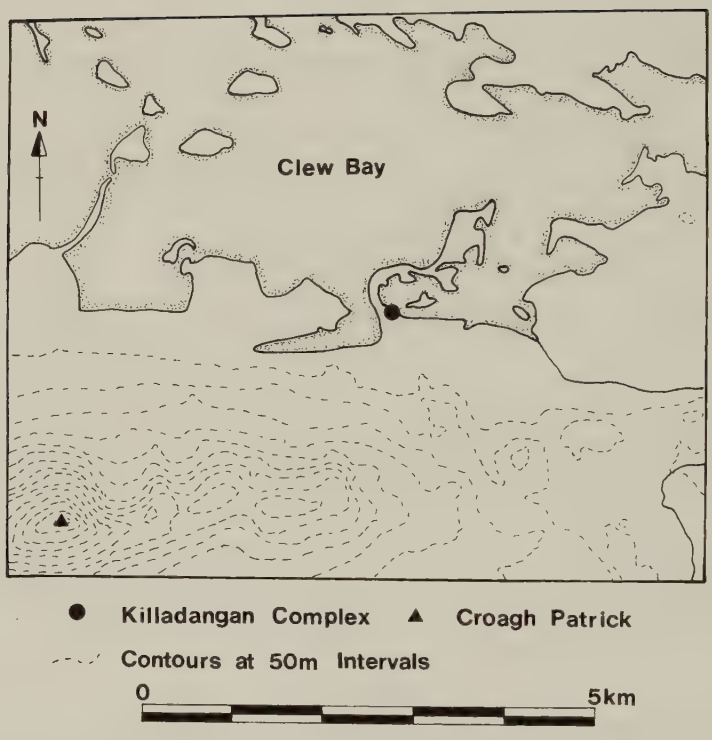



Fig. 1 Location of Killadangan standing stone complex.

## LOCAL FOLKLORE

The surviving local folklore relating to the Killadangan standing stone complex provides an interesting dimension to the site. One such local story suggests that the standing stones at Killadangan are "a pagan cemetery, and that the ashes of Firbolg chiefs lie in urns beneath the boulders" (Quinn 1993, 201). The legend appears to represent local explanations for the monuments at the site.

Perhaps the most intriguing folk-tale about the site is recorded by a local story teller, James Berry, who relates a story in which the king of Killadangan was the brother of Queen Maeve's first husband (Horgan 1988, 94-7). The name of this "great pagan king" seems to have disappeared from local tradition, whereas the name of his lazy servant, Thulera, remains in folk memory. In this story the king makes a vain attempt to force the sea and tide under his obedience. As the king awaits the incoming tide, his servant falls asleep, and the monarch is forced to fight a single-handed battle wielding his sword against the encroaching sea. Both the king and Thulera are drowned for their efforts. This story appears to explain the encroachment of the sea into the area around the standing stone monuments.

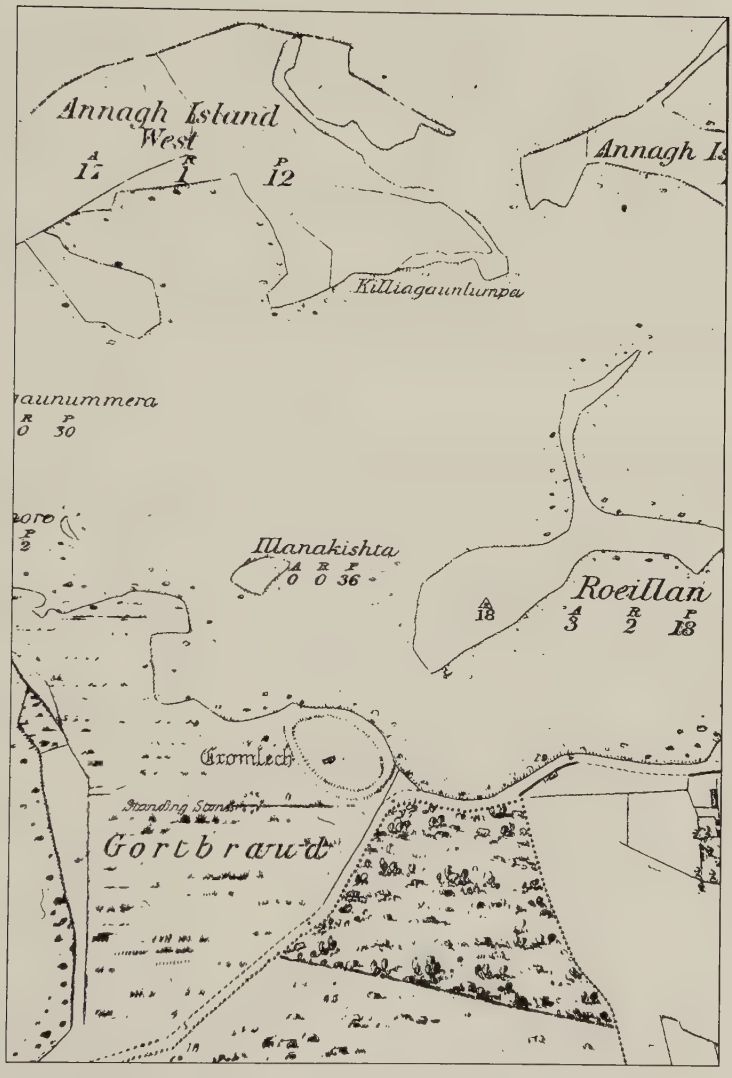



Fig. 2 Detail of 1838 OS 6″ map.

DESCRIPTION OF THE MONUMENTS

*Earthen enclosure*

A roughly oval earthen enclosure (Internal dimensions: 95m NW-SE x 60m NE-SW), consisting of earthen banks of clay built on the salt marsh and ditches cut into the salt marsh (fig. 3). The inner bank is best preserved at the N where it is flat-topped (Width at top: 0.6m; Overall width: 2.2m; Internal height 0.5m; External height 0.8 m), and is much reduced along the south and west (Average

width: 1m; Internal height: 0.2m; External height: 0.4m). There is a gap in the bank at the NW (7m wide), which does not appear to represent an entrance to the enclosure. Immediately outside the bank, along the west, is a silted up ditch (Width: 1.1m; Depth: 0.2m), but which is still open at the N (Width 2.5m; Depth 0.4m), exposing the mineral soil. There is no evidence for a ditch at the E, SE, or S. About 1.6m outside this ditch is a rounded outer bank (Width: 1.4m; Internal height: 0.2m; External height: 0.5m) which survives from NNW to NNE, and from NNE to ENE this bank has been reduced to an low embankment or scarp (Height: 0.35m), 2.2m outside the inner ditch. There are traces of a silted up outer ditch (Width: 0.8m; Depth: 0.1m) from NNW to N. Confined within the enclosure are NNE-SSW cultivation ridges (Average width: 1.5m; Height: 0.1m).

*Stone row*

The stone row (figs 3 & 4; Pls 1-3) is marked as a *Cromlech* on the current edition OS 6" map, and occurs within the western quadrant of the large enclosure described above. The row consists of four stones in a NNE-SSW alignment. The stones, from the NNE, measure 0.45m high, 0.8m wide x 0.35m thick; 1m high, 1m wide x 0.6m thick; 1m high, 1m wide x 0.9m thick; 1.2 high, 1m wide x 0.7m thick. The latter stone is presently vertically split. The stones are sub-rounded or sub-angular boulders. De Valera and Ó Nualláin (1964, 98-99) suggest that this is a five stone row, and that a prostrate stone nearby formed part of the original alignment. There are several prostrate stones in the vicinity, however, without archaeological excavation it is impossible to verify whether or not the present four stones represent the original extent of the monument.

From the description above it is clear that there is an increase in the height of the stones of the row from NNE to SSW, rising in the direction of a niche in the eastern shoulder of Croagh Patrick, 2km directly south-south-west. At approximately 1.40pm on the winter solstice (21st December) the sun begins to set in this niche, and is directly in line with the stone row at 1.45pm (Pl. 3), and proceeds to disappear completely behind the shoulder of Croagh Patrick around 1.50pm. This was initially noticed by Gerry

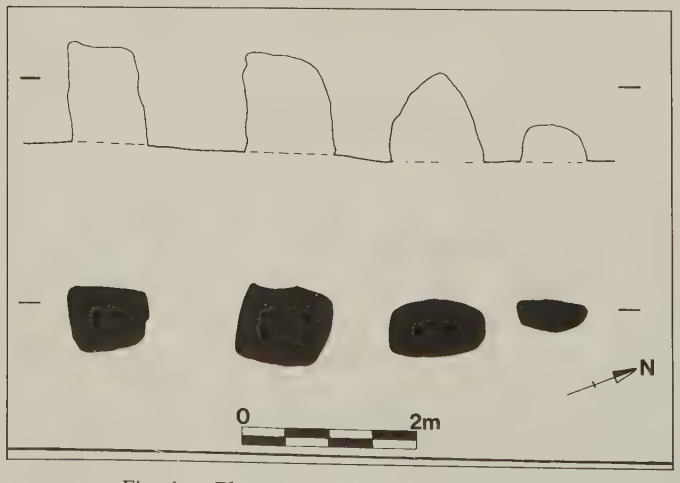



Fig. 4 Plan and elevation of stone row.

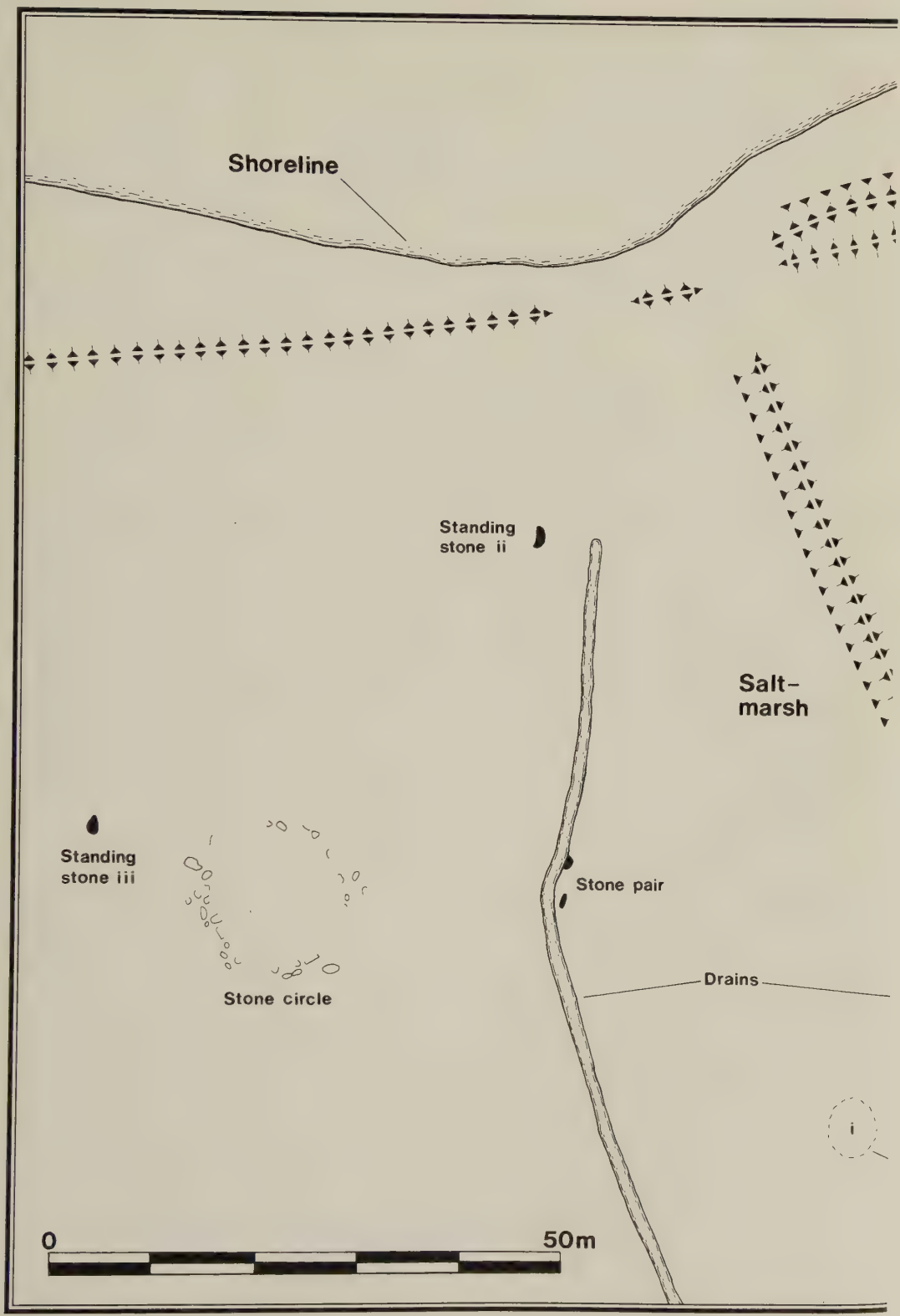
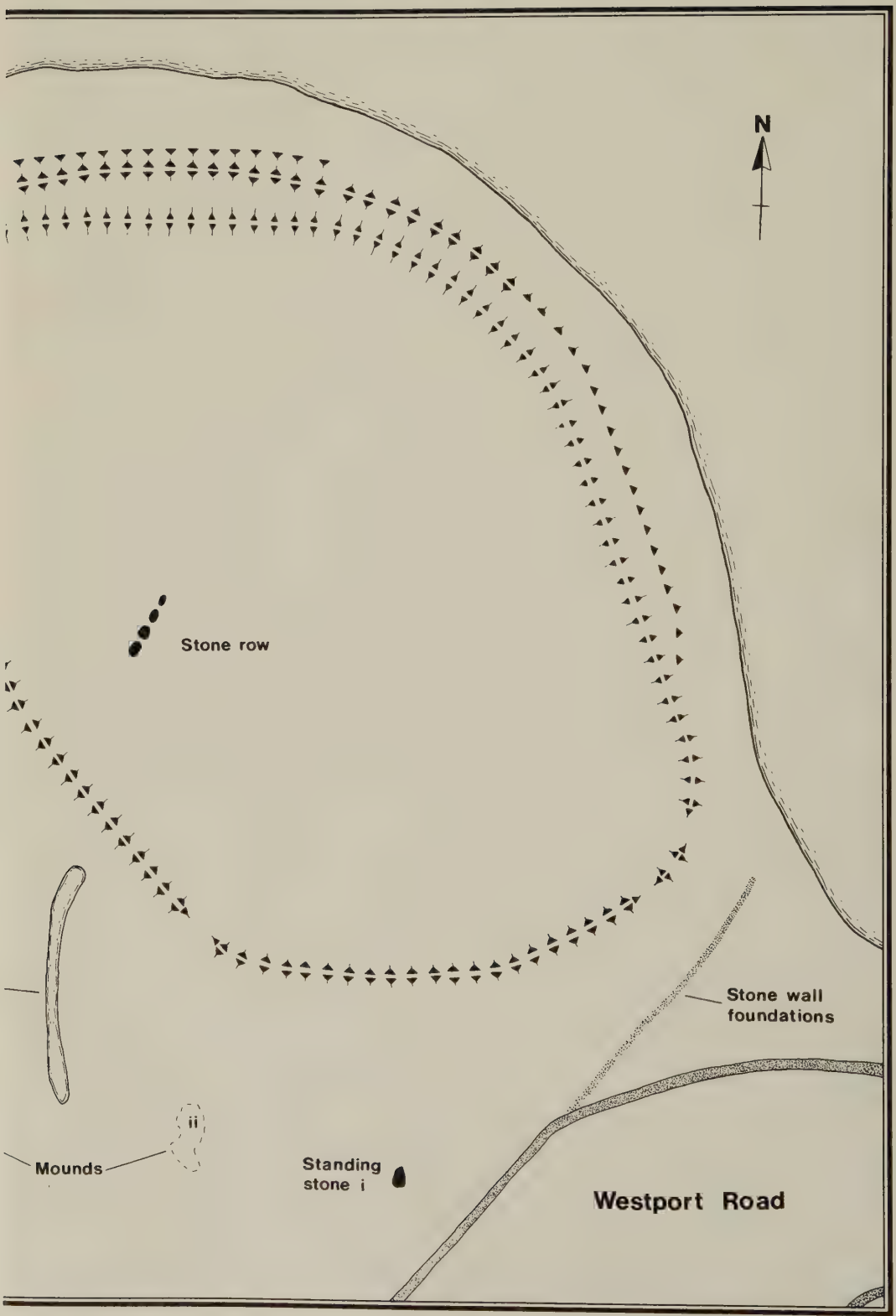



Fig. 3 Plan of Killadangan standing stone complex.


N
Stone row
Stone wall foundations
ii
Mounds
Standing stone i
Westport Road

Bracken who brought this to the attention of the present writer in 1993. The time is quite early in the day for a sunset, however, once the sun sets behind the shoulder of the mountain, the southern shores of Clew Bay are effectively in darkness until the following morning, and this darkness is made all the more noticeable because the northern shores of the bay continue to bask in sunshine. Barber (1973, 27) has established that an accuracy of +/- 1° can be expected for Bronze Age alignments with a foresight 10m distant from the observer. This suggests the orientation of the stone row according to an alignment with the setting sun, and the date and time at which this occurs, remains considerably accurate.

*Stone pair*

50m south-west of the stone row is a stone pair (figs 3 & 5). The northern stone, a split boulder, leans 10° east of vertical. The stone is 1.3m high, 0.8m wide x 0.35m thick, oriented NNE-SSW. Situated 3.1m south is a sub-rounded boulder, 0.4m high, 0.85m wide x 0.25m thick, oriented NNE-SSW. This stone leans 20° east of vertical. Directly to the west of these stones a shallow, modern drain 0.25m deep and 0.7m wide has been cut into the salt-marsh, exposing the mineral soil in which the northern stone has been inserted. The present writer has refrained from classifying this site as a two-stone row, as the long axes of the stones are not aligned on one another, and are therefore not standing in a true row. However, the long axis of each stone is oriented towards the niche in the eastern shoulder of Croagh Patrick, and the setting of the sun into this niche can be viewed best from this site about two days before and after the winter solstice.

*Isolated standing stones*

There are three standing stones situated randomly throughout the complex (figs 3 & 6). Salt-water pools in the marsh around each of these stones have exposed the underlying mineral soil in which the stones have been inserted. Standing stone I is 56m south-south-east of the stone row. The stone, a sub-rounded boulder, is 1.4m high, 1.10m wide x 0.6m thick. The stone is oriented NE-SW, and leans 20° north-west of vertical. Standing stone II (Pl. 4) is 50m west-north-west of the stone row. The stone, a sub-rounded boulder, is 1.05m wide, 0.52m thick and is 1.35m high at the S, decreasing gently to 1.24 high at N. The stone is

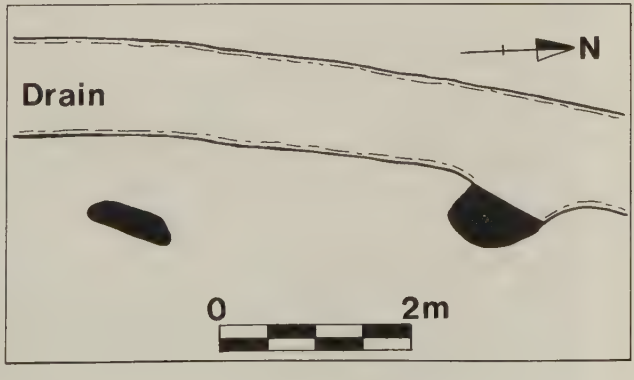



Fig. 5 Plan of stone pair.

oriented N-S, and leans 10° W of vertical. Standing stone III, a split boulder, is 90m west-south-west of the stone row, and is 1.55m high, 0.8m wide x 0.55m thick, oriented NNE-SSW.

The long axis of each of these three standing stones appears to be oriented on the niche in the eastern shoulder of Croagh Patrick, though Standing stone II deviates very slightly from this alignment. This stone is leaning slightly to the west, and it seems plausible to argue that originally the stone's long axis, like all the standing stones on the site, was associated with the niche mentioned above. It is also noticeable that there is an increase in the height of all three standing stones from N to S, which compares with the stone row, and emphasises a link between each standing stone and the niche on which the stones were probably originally oriented. The setting sun of the winter solstice can be viewed from standing stone II, approximately one minute earlier than the stone row. From standing stone I and III the setting sun can be viewed best about four and two days respectively, before and after the winter solstice.

*Possible stone circle*

75m SW of the stone row, and just E of Standing stone III, is a roughly circular arrangement of small sub-angular and sub-rounded boulders enclosing an area 13m in diameter (figs 3 & 7). This appears to represent the remains of a stone

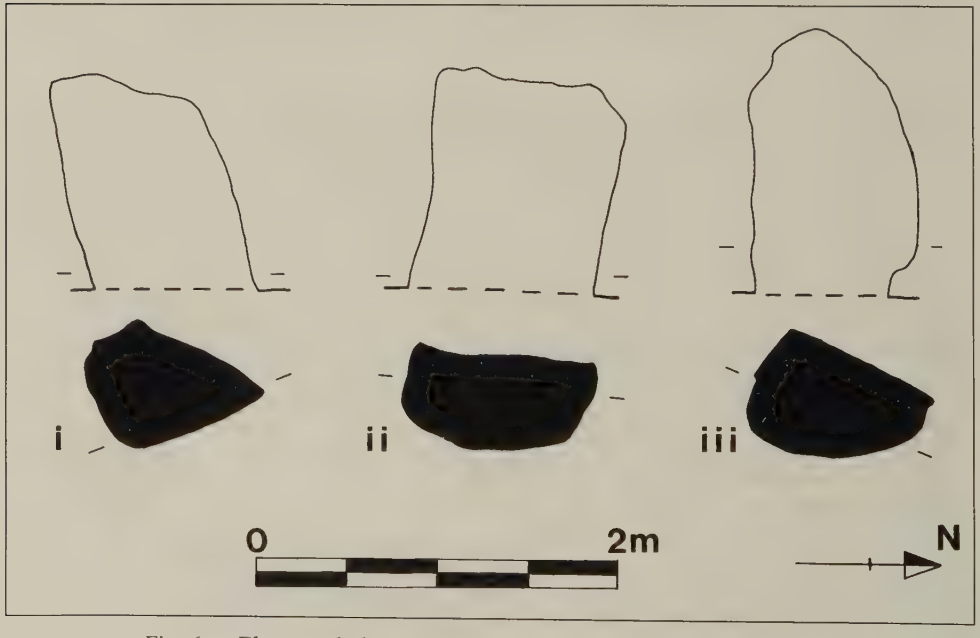



Fig. 6 Plans and elevations of single standing stones I, II & III.

Plate 1: KILLADANGAN STONE ROW
(Croagh Patrick in background)

circle marked on the 1837 OS 6" map, on which it appears to represent a well-defined circle of stones, probably consisting of orthostats or boulders. Presently the site is much dismantled, and is best preserved in the east, south-west and west. Some of the stones may be set, but generally they appear to be lying loose, presumably in a disturbed position. The stones are rarely exposed more than 0.36m above the surrounding salt-marsh, which averages 0.2-0.4m high. There are several gaps in the arrangement and two stones just outside the eastern arc may represent a formal entrance to the enclosure. Within the enclosed area there is an irregular salt-water pool, exposing the mineral soil.

*Other features (fig. 3)*

45m SSW of the stone row is a low, roughly circular grass-covered mound (approximately 5.7m N-S x 5.6 E-W; 0.3m high). Roughly central are three stones protruding above the grass cover. Probing with an iron rod indicates that the feature consists primarily of stone material beneath 0.05-0.1m of sod cover. Without archaeological excavation it is not possible to determine conclusively the nature of the feature.

45m S of the stone row is a low, irregularly shaped earthen mound (approximately 5.6m N-S x 3.6m E-W; 0.4m high). Probing with an iron rod indicates that the feature consists of stone material beneath 0.05-0.1m of sod cover. Without archaeological excavation it is not possible to determine conclusively the nature of the site.

60m ESE of the stone row are the foundation stones of a field fence 25m long, running NE-SW. The stones presently visible, consist of randomly placed boulders (maximum height 0.5m), which appear to rest on the mineral soil. The wall is situated on the very edge of the salt-marsh, near the main road, and at this point the salt-marsh is only 0.1-0.2m high, making it difficult to assess the stratigraphical relationship of this wall, the salt-marsh and the underlying mineral soil. However, it should be noted that this wall extends the line of the modern wall flanking the north side of the Westport-Louisburgh road, which presently makes a sudden turn east. From the point of this turn the foundations of the wall described above extend north-eastwards, and stops short of the present shoreline. It is possible that this wall predates the encroachment of the sea in this area, and if so, it may indicate that the wall flanking the north side of the modern road is super-imposed on an earlier wall which divided the salt marsh from the agricultural land. Alternatively, the wall may predate the initiation of the salt marsh in the area, and may have served to divide the ritual area of the standing stone complex from the living or secular landscape to the south.

Fig. 7: Plan of stone circle.

## DISCUSSION OF THE MONUMENT TYPES

*Earthen enclosure*

The enclosure is not morphologically typical of enclosures found elsewhere in the country. The oval plan defined by a bank and outer fosse can be superficially compared with the Irish ringfort series, dated generally from AD 600-900 (Stout 1997, 22-31), though it is worth noting that ringforts are unusual in this area of the country (*ibid.*, 59). There are several reasons for doubting the classification of the enclosure as a ringfort, for example, the dimensions are unusually large (*ibid.*, 14-21). Also, the siting of a settlement site such as a ringfort on a salt-marsh seems odd, given that there is more suitable and comfortable dry agricultural land nearby. Arguments for a defensive aspect to its location do not hold up, particularly given the presence of more easily defensible islands nearby. The present writer has noticed that at Leap-tide level the salt-marsh becomes extensively waterlogged, and the waters partially sub-merge the entire standing stone complex, and even envelope the entire perimeter of the large enclosure, while its interior remains effectively, or, at least, comparatively dry. This may indicate that the line of the enclosure was designed quite deliberately and carefully to enclose the largest area that would successfully exclude even the highest tide levels. Could this mean that

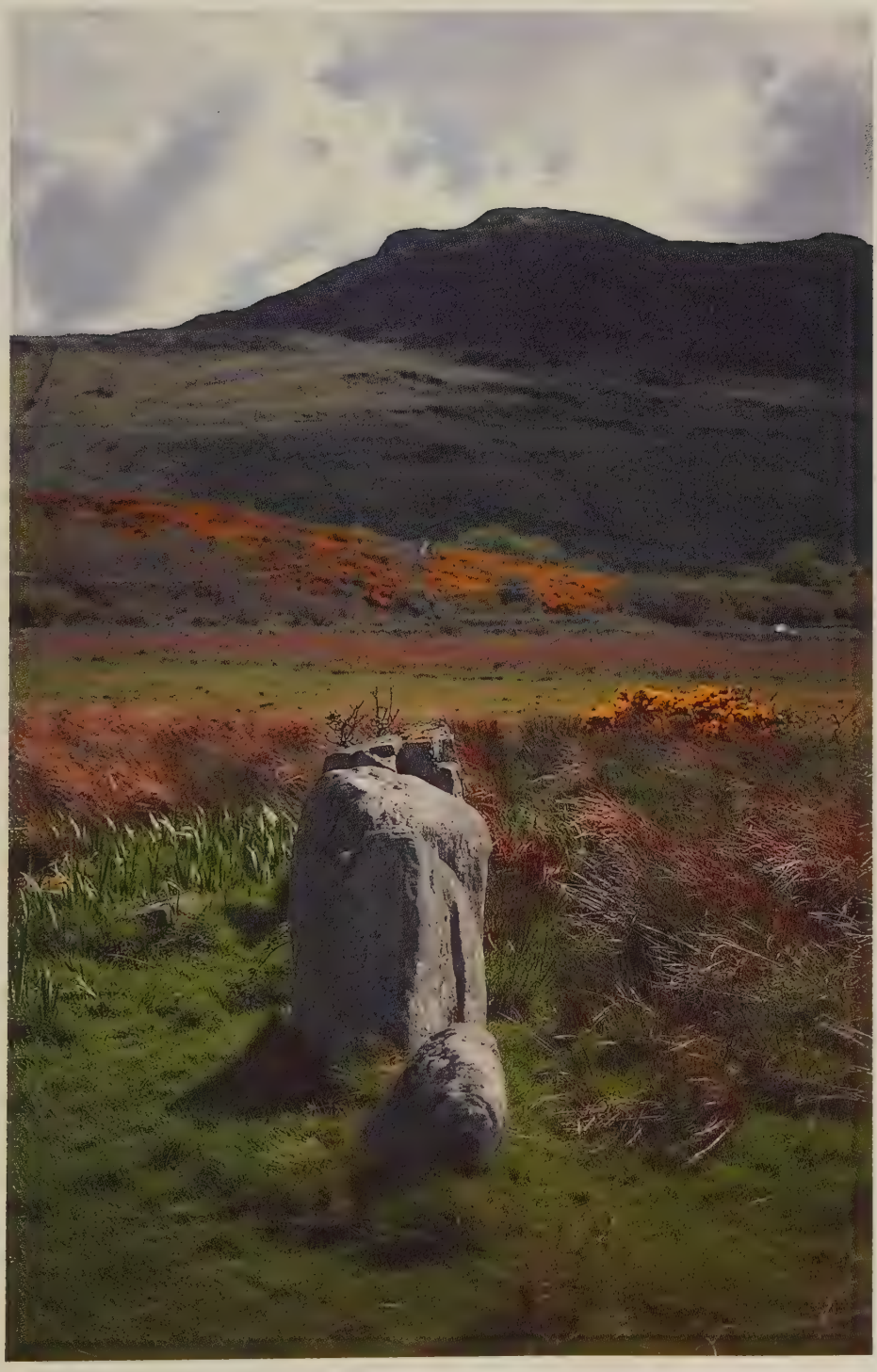


Plate 2: KILLADANGAN STONE ROW
- from NNE

the ramparts of the enclosure were specifically designed to exclude the torrents of the sea rather than the ravages of man?

Its construction on the salt-marsh suggests that the enclosure post-dates the standing stone complex at the site, which appears to pre-date the initiation of the salt-marsh in the area. Two phases of construction of the enclosure can be identified, primarily at the north and east of the site. The two phases are represented by the inner and outer ramparts of the enclosure, which are argued here to be successive. The general plan of the enclosure was not altered, however, at the north and east it appears that the original bank and ditch of the enclosure (now the outer rampart) became eroded and reduced by high-tide wave action. The current inner bank and ditch represents a subsequent, modified line of the enclosure at the north and east, retreating into the previously defined area of the enclosure. Elsewhere the original line of the enclosure appears to have been retained. This modification may reflect the enclosure's use as a field plot, probably during the post-medieval period, contemporary with the cultivation ridges within the enclosure, and the excavation of drainage ditches elsewhere in the salt-marsh. The question remains to be answered regarding the function of the original enclosure. Does the subsequent, albeit partial, modification of the enclosure represent a change of function, or is it possible that this represents maintenance of, rather than conversion to, a field plot? Certainly, its situation on the salt-marsh would argue against it representing a settlement enclosure, and there is little evidence to indicate that the original bank and ditch were ever sufficient as defensive components.

*Stone rows*

Stone rows are a well-defined monument type, with a wide distribution pattern throughout much of Ireland. There is a particularly dense concentration of stone rows in the south-west of Ireland, in counties Cork and Kerry, where a general NE-SW axis is typical (Ó Nualláin 1988; Walsh 1993, 102). The rows consist of between two and six stones of megalithic proportions, and out of a total of 195 sites in this area, only 10% consist of four stones (*ibid.* 102). The stone rows at Beaghmore, county Tyrone, are morphologically different from the Killadangan row, though have comparable NE-SW alignments (May 1953; Pilcher 1969). Evenso, it would appear that the Killadangan stone row compares best with those in the south-west of Ireland. However, equally important comparisons can be made not so far afield. For example, the N-S orientation and gradation in the height of the stones of the alignment from south to north at Killadangan is comparable with examples from north-west Connemara (Gibbons & Higgins 1988, 66; Gosling 1993), as well as the two other examples from south-west Mayo at Askillaun (Corlett 1997a, 7 P. 2) and Liscarney, and also from Kilasser in north-east Mayo, at Corlee and Cuillonaghtan (O'Hara 1991, 91-3). Two examples of two-stone rows can be found on the north side of Clew Bay, at Knockalegan and Rosgalliv.

The basic rule of a NNE-SSW orientation of stone rows and single standing stones in the west of Ireland means that the architects of the Killadangan stone row had to opt for an early afternoon sunset on the 21st December, rather than a time around the true setting sun about 4.00pm. The early afternoon sunset at Killadangan has an interesting comparison at Gleninagh in neighbouring county Galway. This stone row, which also has a NNE-SSW orientation (Gosling 1993, 17-8), is aligned on the setting sun in a gap between Bencorr and Bencollaghduff mountains on the 21st December at 2.15pm (M. Gibbons, pers. comm.). The use of a stone monuments to view and celebrate the movements of the sun are not unusual elsewhere in Ireland. In the south-west of the country, out of 37 stone alignments "23 had significant astronomical alignments" (Lynch 1981b, 25). Moore (1995, 217-221, 231) has proposed quite a complex calender and sun dial for Sanctuary T, which forms part of a Bronze Age ritual complex in the Monavullagh Mountains, county Waterford. The closest example of a stone row to Killadangan, is a double stone row at Askillaun, west of Louisburgh. At a rock art site and standing stone at Boheh, south of Westport, Bracken and Wayman (1992) have suggested another caledrical division of the year celebrated by the setting sun as it appears to roll down the nothern shoulder of Croagh Patrick. Curiously, there is no setting sun phenomenon at Askillaun (Corlett 1997a), which clearly indicates that the celebration of the winter solstice sunset was not the sole function of these monuments in the west of Ireland.

*Stone circles*

Stone circles are most commonly found in the south-west of Ireland, in particular counties Cork and Kerry (Ó Nualláin 1984), and also in mid-Ulster (Ó Nualláin 1995). Stone circles are not common in county Mayo, though several sites are known from the county, such as a cluster of three from south Mayo near the village of Cong (Lohan 1993; Lavelle *et al.* 1994, 3), and two further examples are known from north Mayo near Killala (Ó Nualláin 1995, 35). A possible stone circle occurs at Devlin North, south of Louisburgh (Corlett 1997a, 80). The stone circles of the south-west of Ireland typically consist of a circular arrangement of at least four spaced orthostats, featuring an axial stone on the south-west perimeter of the circle, opposite the entrance, which is defined by the two tallest stones of the circle (Ó Nualláin 1984; Walsh 1993). The diameters of the circles vary between 2.5 to 17m. The stone circles of mid-Ulster are generally of slightly greater diameter, defined by a large number of low stones. Given the denuded state of the stone circle at Killadangan it is difficult to compare this site with other stone circles in Ireland. At present the low-lying, closely situated stones form a monument quite similar to the stone circles from mid-Ulster, though the diameter is comparatively small. However, the circle of stones marked on the 1838 edition of the OS 6" map suggests a circle of spaced orthostats or boulders, and may have been of quite different construction to what remains today.

*Standing stones*

Isolated standing stones are found throughout much of Ireland, with several dense distributions in western Ireland, for example in south-west Mayo (Corlett 1997a), and throughout much of Connemara in north-west Galway (Gibbons & Higgins 1988). The NNE-SSW orientation of the long axes of the single standing stones at Killadangan is consistent with the isolated standing stones found in both south-west Mayo and Connemara. The NNE-SSW orientation of these stones is probably best compared with the stone row on the site, and the increase in the N to S height of the three standing stones, can also be paralleled with the stone row.

*Other features*

Without archaeological excavation, little can be said regarding the nature of the two small mounds at the site, though their stone composition may indicate that they represent small burial cairns, such as those found at the standing stone complex at Beaghmore (May 1953). Similarly, without archaeological excavation, it is difficult to assess the wall foundations at the south-east limit of the site. It seems improbable that the wall at Killadangan, unlike those at Beaghmore (*ibid.*) represents earlier agricultural activity at the site, though that is not to say that such land-use did not take place prior to the use of the area as a ritual space. Perhaps the wall was intended to separate the ritual landscape from the living landscape.

## DATING EVIDENCE

Currently there is no direct dating evidence for the sequence of events at Killadangan. On present evidence, discussed below, the following sequence of events is proposed: (a) the erection of the standing stone monuments during the later Bronze Age, (b) the encroachment of the sea, due to rising sea-levels or coastal erosion (or a combination of both), (c) the initiation of the salt-marsh, and (d) the construction of the large earthen enclosure, possibly as late as the post-Medieval period. The establishment of a date for the encroachment of the sea and the subsequent initiation of the salt-marsh would provide a more specific chronology for the sequence of events at the site, particularly regarding the antiquity of the earthen enclosure at the site.

*Standing stone monuments*

The dating of stone rows and circles in Ireland has been at the centre of considerable debate among researchers (for example, see Walsh 1993). Two quite closely comparable sites with the Killadangan complex have been excavated, Beaghmore, county Tyrone and Cashelkeelty, county Kerry, and the dating evidence from these sites has implications for the standing stones at Killadangan. The standing stone complex at Beaghmore, discussed below, has been dated by

Pilcher (1969, 89) to the later part of the Bronze Age. At Cashelkeelty a four-stone row was constructed earlier than the adjacent five-stone circle. Radiocarbon dating suggested a possible construction date of 1362-794 BC (Lynch 1981a). The stone circles at Drombeg and Reenascreena South, county Cork, have also been dated to the later Bronze Age (O'Brien 1992, 26, 31-5).

Single standing stones are typically difficult to date. Cooney (1996) has argued that some standing stones may date to the Neolithic. At Kiltullagh on the border of counties Mayo and Roscommon, a standing stone, oriented E-W, was excavated (McCormack *et al.* 1995). Adjacent to the standing stone was an unaccompanied inhumation, radiocarbon dated to AD 418-442. In general, however, single standing stones are considered to date to some time within the Bronze Age (Herity & Eogan 1977; Harbison 1988; O'Kelly 1989), though there has been considerable disagreement about more specific dating within that period. A later Bronze Age date is suggested by the present writer for the stone row and circle at Killadangan, and, on the basis of association, the single standing stones are almost certainly contemporary.

*Encroachment of the sea and the initiation of the salt-marsh*

The situation of the standing stone complex at Killadangan within a salt-marsh is a particularly interesting feature of this site. The salt-marsh throughout this area averages 0.35 to 0.4m deep, and there are several salt water pools scattered throughout the marsh which expose the mineral soil. Extending from the west in an arc to the north is a ridge of land known as Annagh. Between the salt-marsh and Annagh is a basin which becomes flooded at high-tide. At the west, a natural barrier linking Annagh with the mainland has become breached by the erosion and rising levels of the sea. The sea has also encroached from the east, and it is through east-flowing gullies that the water ebbs from the basin at low-tide. Without further detailed analysis it is not possible to determine when the area became engulfed by the sea, and when the salt-marsh was initiated. It is generally agreed that the last significant rise in Irish sea-levels occurred 6000 or 7000 years ago during the Postglacial Climatic Optimum (Mitchell & Ryan 1997, 99-100), several thousand years before the standing stone monuments were erected at Killadangan. However, at present no detailed chronology has been established for subsequent sea-level changes in Clew Bay, which, though probably less dramatic, may have been partly responsible for the encroachment of the sea into this area. Evenso, a change in sea-level may not be the primary factor involved, and the erosion of the drumlin islands of Clew Bay occurs at a tremendous pace, in the region of 0.01m to 0.1m a year. Erosion of the low-lying valleys between the drumlins probably occurred at an even faster rate. Over the period of three thousand years or so since the Killadangan standing stone complex was erected, it is difficult to estimate, but easy to visualise that an enormous degree of coastal erosion has taken place. Therefore, it seems plausible

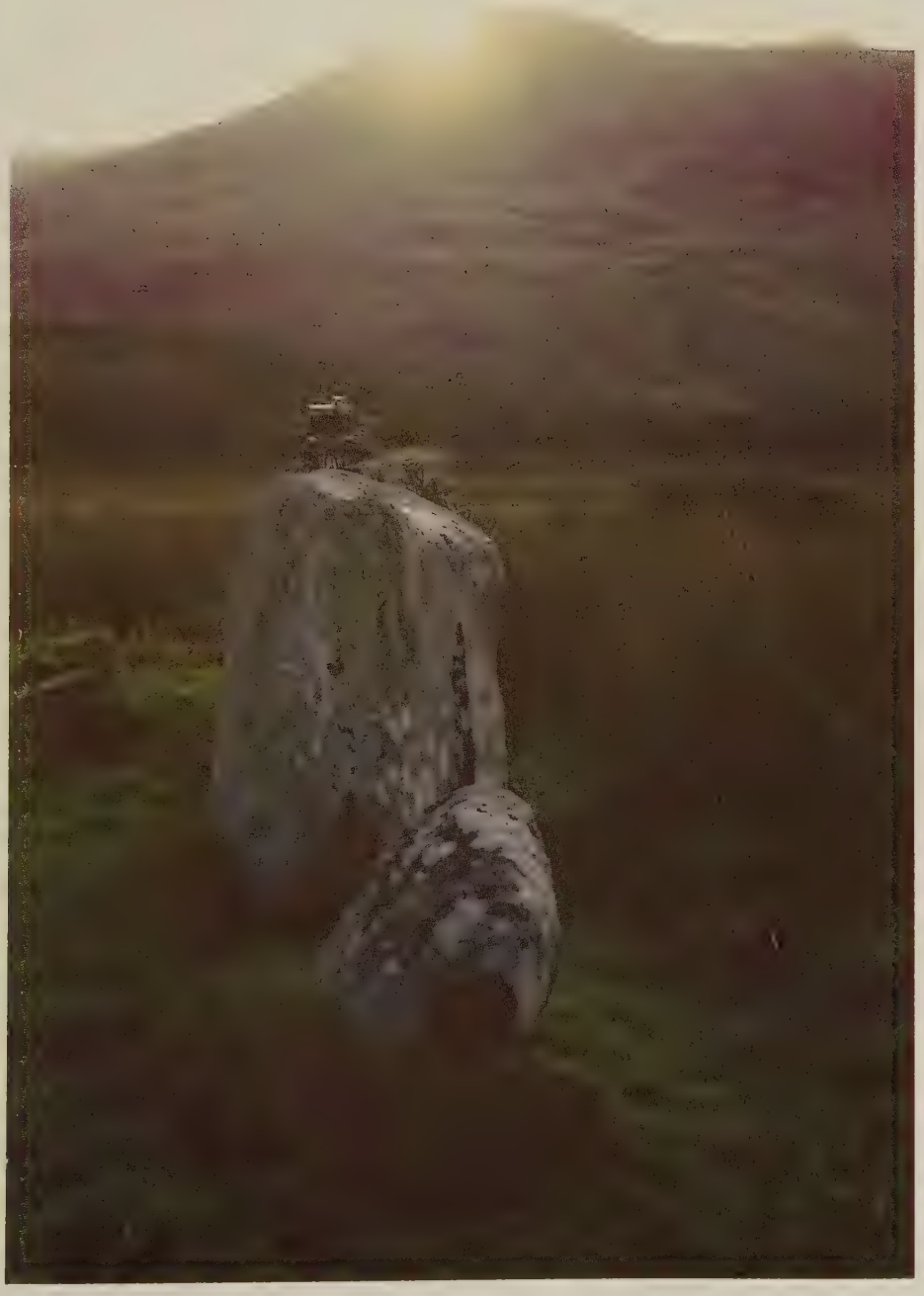


Plate 3: SUN SET

1.45 p.m., 21st December 1994, in niche directly SSW of Killadangan stone row

that even without a significant rise in sea level, the erosive forces of the sea over a period of say two thousand years (by about 1000 AD or later) the sea had forced its way into the area of Killadangan, initiating the salt marsh in an area which had previously been dry, low-lying land, separated and protected from the sea by an earlier coastline, somewhere north-west and north of Annagh.

*Earthen enclosure*

Stratigraphically it is clear that the earthen enclosure at Killadangan post-dates the standing stone complex at the site. It is proposed above that the salt-marsh at Killadangan may have been initiated sometime after 1000 AD, (though this needs to be validated by future detailed research). If so, this would imply that the large earthen enclosure, which is clearly built on the salt-marsh, post-dates the initiation of the salt-marsh by perhaps as much as several centuries. It has been argued above that the enclosure was used at some stage as a field enclosure. Future archaeological excavation may resolve questions of the original function and dating of the enclosure. However, it seems possible that the original function of the enclosure was also as a field plot, possibly dating to the end of the 18th century or beginning of the 19th century, a time of considerable population pressure and resultant stress on agricultural land in this area.

## INTERPRETATION OF THE KILLADANGAN COMPLEX

The occurrence of a stone row, a stone circle, single standing stones and a possible cairn as part of a ceremonial complex is not unprecedented in Ireland. A good comparison for the Killadangan complex can be found at Beaghmore in county Tyrone (May 1953). The Beaghmore complex consists of three pairs of stone circles and an isolated stone circle, each associated with one or more radiating stone rows. There are also several small stone cairns, some of which were found to mark cremation burials. Admittedly, the arrangement and morphology of the monuments at Beaghmore offer little comparison with those at Killadangan, however, the type of monuments at both sites compare well. At Beaghmore, the excavator concluded the whole complex to be roughly contemporary, allowing for the probability that the complex developed over time rather than as a preconceived plan. The apparently random situation of the single standing stones at Killadangan may at first glance suggest a haphazard development of the complex over time. However, it is suggested here that the Killadangan complex was designed as part of a pre-conceived plan. This is an important point to make, and while it is tempting to see the stone row at Killadangan as the focus of the complex, it is probable that the complete complex was more important than any individual element.

Several standing stone complexes are known from the south-west of Ireland (Walsh 1993, 106-7), although these examples sometimes feature boulder burials and radial stone cairns which are not found in county Mayo (there is one possible boulder burial from county Mayo at Knockroosky). In the south-west of

Ireland stone rows (generally restricted to just two stones) are more typically associated with five-stone circles. Ó Nualláin (1988, 194) has argued that rows and circles are closely related elements of one tradition, accepting that they had a separate ceremonial or ritual function (Walsh 1993, 111). In county Mayo, however, stone rows and circles, with the exception of the Killadangan complex, are not found in association and their distributions are not similar. This highlights the importance of the Killadangan standing stone complex from a regional point of view, as no other standing stone complexes are known in mid-west Ireland, though the individual elements which form the complex occur throughout much of this area.

The function of standing stone complexes is open to tremendous speculation, and archaeological excavation generally has proved disappointing from a functional regard. It is clear that they serve as a place "where people congregated to participate in ceremonial rites" (Walsh 1993, 106). It is possible to argue that the setting sun of the winter solstice at Killadangan is only one element of a variety of performed rituals and ceremonies, and Lynch has warned that such alignments do not represent a "detailed scientific knowledge on the part of the alignment builders" (Lynch 1981b, 27). Therefore, the Killadangan stone row may simply reflect an awareness of the solar cycle, and a limited and unscientific form of calendrical division of the year. However, it is equally plausible to argue that the stone row at Killadangan, and perhaps the entire complex, was designed specifically to celebrate a calendrical division of the year, and that the winter solstice may have been at the focus of a calendar devised to impose order on the universe. Such order is reflected in the geometry of the standing stone monuments as lines and circles. The fact that the setting sun of the winter solstice can also be seen from standing stone II at Killadangan, and given that the setting sun can be best viewed from standing stone I about four days before and after the 21st December, suggests that the entire complex was pre-conceived as a unit, and designed specifically to celebrate the event of the winter solstice over a period of eight or ten days.

It could be argued that the Killadangan complex represents a ritual and ceremonial centre of a local élite social group or community. Alternatively, it may have represented a common ceremonial centre of several local (and not necessarily élite) communities. Finally, it is important not to simply focus on the Killadangan complex or its individual elements, but to place the site in a wider local context. It also forms an important part of an extensive ritual landscape focused around Croagh Patrick, which was probably considered a sacred mountain in the west of Ireland (Corlett 1996 & 1997b). Given that the winter solstice sun sets behind the eastern shoulder of Croagh Patrick it could be argued that there is a direct link between the rituals carried out at Killadangan and the ritual worship of the mountain.

## CONCLUSION

The Killadangan standing stone complex consists of a fascinating mix of standing stone monuments, and is presently unique in mid-west Ireland. In the absence of dating evidence at Killadangan, comparisons with standing stone monuments and complexes elsewhere in Ireland suggest a later Bronze Age date for the complex, which may have been planned as a unit rather than developed over time. Further investigation may reveal the relationship between the standing stone complex and its present context within a coastal salt-marsh. The dating and functional status of the large earthen enclosure remains unresolved, but it appears to represent the final phase of activity on the site, and may represent a post-medieval field-plot. The orientation of the stone row on the setting sun of the winter solstice illustrates at least one of many rituals carried out at the site, and suggests that the complex is inextricably linked to the prehistoric ritual landscape of Croagh Patrick.

*All photographs are by the author.*

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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From *Archaeology Ireland*, Vol. 11, No. 4, Winter 1997.

*The Journal of the Galway Archaeological and Historical Society* 49 (1997) is to be congratulated on the number of colour plates it includes, notably the spectacular frontispiece reproducing Thomas Phillips' famous 'prospect of Galway' in 1685 (surely meriting separate sale as a print or poster?) and the photographs accompanying Chris Corlett's detailed survey of prehistoric archaeology in the parish of Kilgeever, south-west Mayo. In other contributions, Stephen Briggs examines the amber beads from the late Bronze Age hoard at Ballycurrin Demesne, Co. Galway, and poses several interesting questions about the source of the amber; while Pat Holland continues his in-depth examination of the Anglo-Norman landscape of County Galway by looking at land-holdings, castles and settlements.

John Bradley

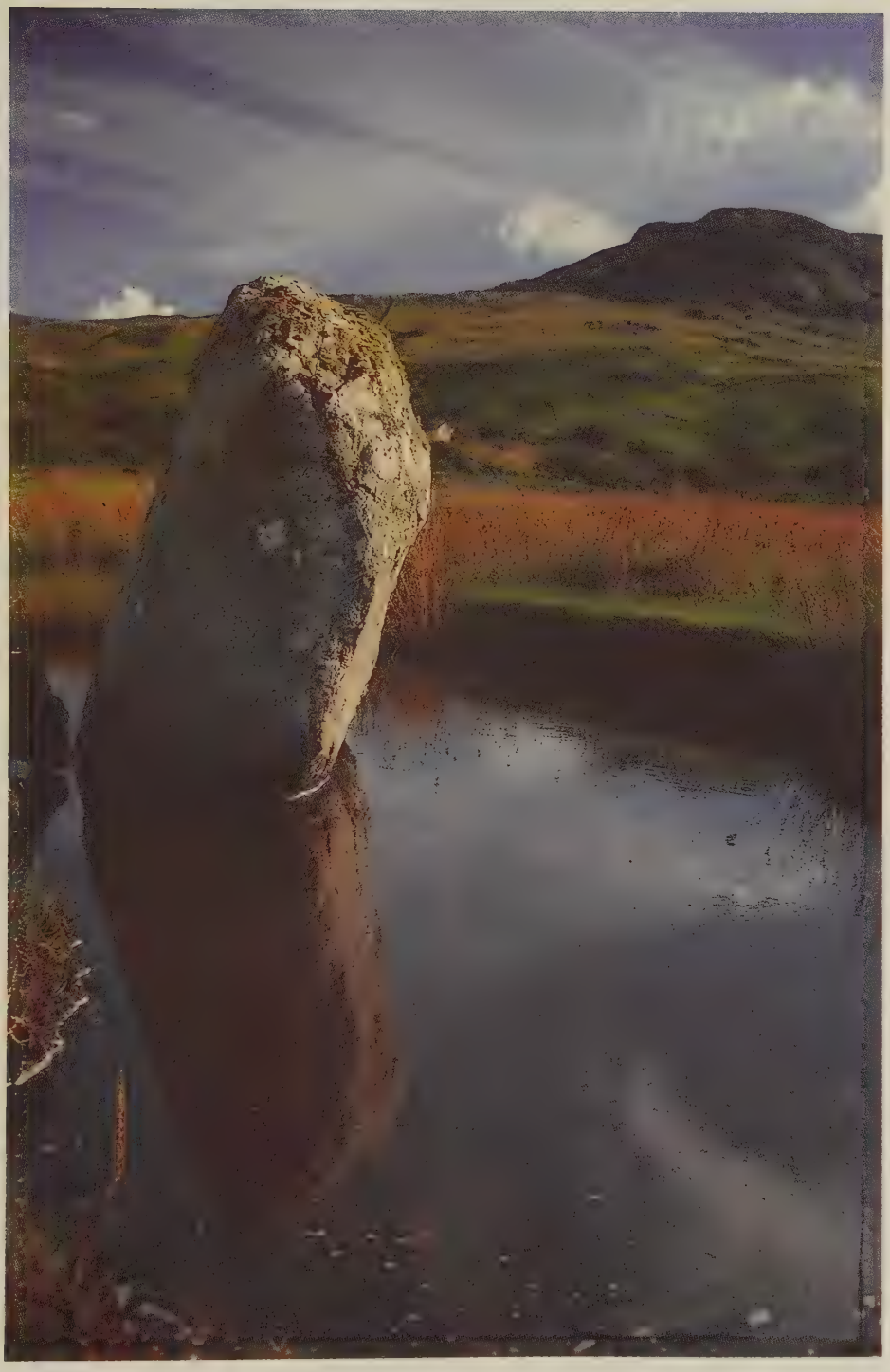


Plate 4: KILLADANGAN SINGLE STANDING STONE II
- from NNW

# LOUGHPARK 'CRANNOG' REVISITED

JAMES LYTTLETON

## THE EXCAVATION OF LOUGHPARK IN CONTEXT

The excavation of the wetland site at Loughpark (S.M.R. 029:16:3, Nat. Grid-14605,252650) was a collaborative effort involving R. A. S. Macalister, E. C. R. Armstrong and R. L. Praeger. The instigator of the excavation was Thomas B. Costello, a G. P. and medical officer for the local authority in Tuam. He was a founder member of the Galway Archaeological and Historical Society which was established at the turn of the century, and in his lifetime, despite his busy schedule as a country doctor, had published a number of articles on the local archaeology of the area. At some point the site at Loughpark, in an area known as Turloughvoghan in the medieval period (Dr Tony Claffey, pers. comm.), was discovered in the course of drainage works and a number of artefacts were found as loose finds (Macalister *et al* 1914, 147). On the 2nd February 1913, Costello wrote to Armstrong who was an Assistant Keeper in the National Museum in Dublin, saying that he had done nothing about the wetland site (presumably in terms of organising labour to dig the site), but there was an expressed hope for a fine summer after all the rain (N. M. I. Files, Armstrong 1912-14).

The excavation took place between the 28th June and 5th July 1913, with four labourers being employed at 3/0 a day. Indeed, because of the turf cutting season they were paid higher than the more usual 2/6 a day and all that was asked of them was to bring a shovel and wheelbarrow (N. M. I. Files, Armstrong 1912-14). Despite the presence of two other eminent scholars of the day, Macalister was the leader with Armstrong and Praeger 'playing second fiddle' to him (Mr. David P. Godden, pers. comm.). Within these few days (excluding the day of Sabbath, for both Macalister and Praeger were Presbyterians), two-thirds of a raised platform, 1.22 metres high, 32.61 to 33.52 metres in diameter was dug down to the "foundations" (Macalister *et al* 1914, 149) by the small team of academics and labourers. The excavation seemed to have caused some local excitement as to whether objects of gold were being disinterred (*Tuam Herald*, 5th July 1913) and the excavators issued a statement to the contrary, being disappointed themselves with recovering the artefacts of a "poor farming family". A copy of the excavation report published in the Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy was subsequently printed in the *Tuam Herald* (25th April 1913) for the benefit of the local people.

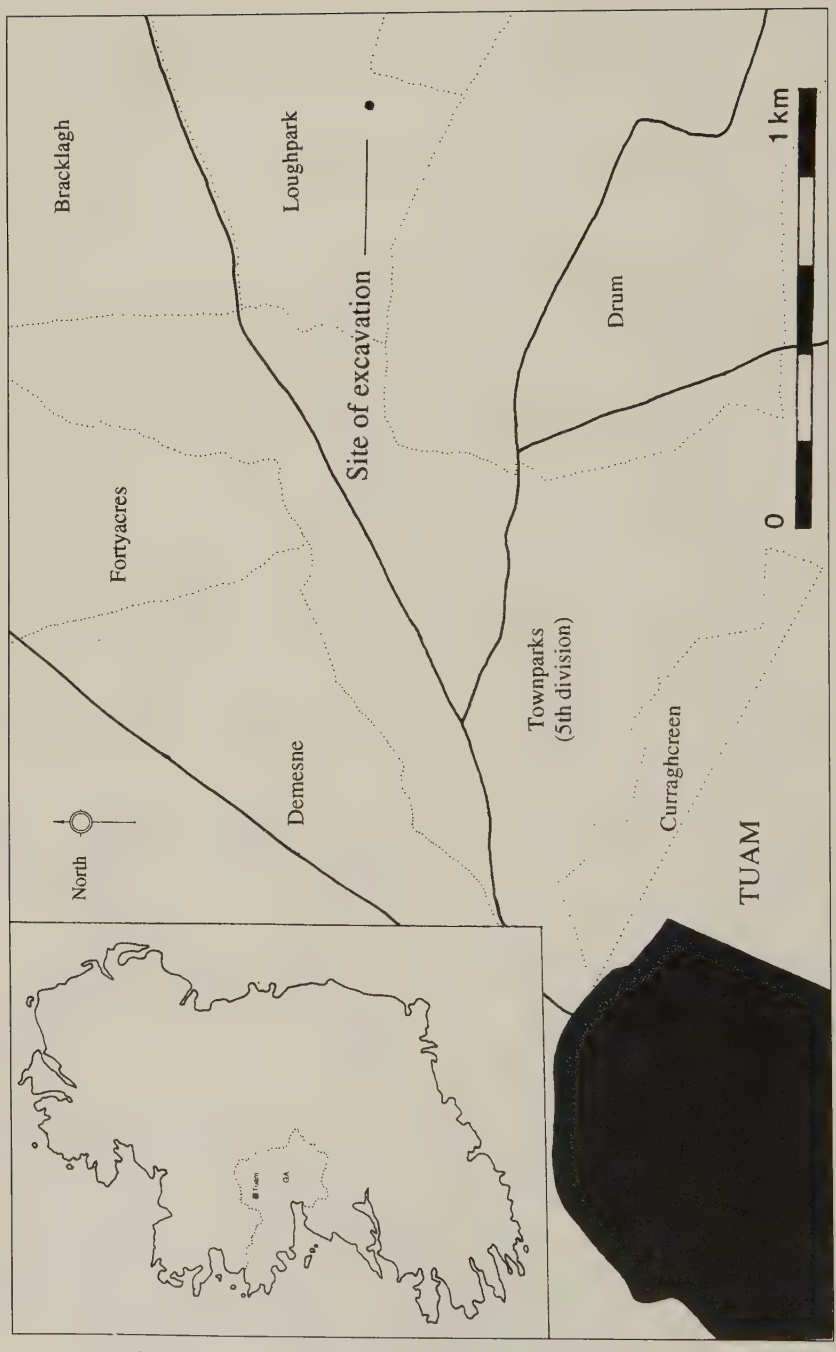



Fig. 1: Location map of the Loughpark excavation.

In the report published by the excavators, they describe excavating "an insignificant circular mound, shaped like an inverted saucer, with a shallow ditch around it" (Macalister *et al* 1914, 147), *see fig. 2 & plate 1*, situated on low lying land (O.D. 100-200) which is prone to winter flooding despite large drainage channels in the locality. The surrounding area is part of the great central plain of Ireland, with occasional high ground, surrounded by large tracts of low lying ground; often covered by extensive bogs. Turloughs are quite common in this part of the country resulting in lake-like sheets of water in places over 6 metres in depth during winter where in summer there is level pasture (Kinahan 1887-8, 6-7). The total diameter of the site was 44.5 metres, the mound or habitation platform as mentioned above being 32.61 to 33.52 metres in extent and 1.22 metres in height. The outer ditch was quite wide, being 10.98 to 11.89 metres wide and only 0.45 metres deep. The investigators noted the only other visible feature was a "subsidary ditch, almost effaced", though no measurements were given from the section of the site it appeared to be c. 3.35 to c. 6.75 metres wide and c. 0.305 metres deep), enclosing an internal area c. 14.6 metres in diameter, and a slight depression on the north side c. 3 metres in length (Macalister *et al* 1914, 148). They asserted that the "usual method of building crannogs was adopted in this case. A stockade of piles being driven into the soft lake-bottom, material was heaped up inside, till an island was formed rising above the surface of the water at its highest flood". This was followed by a paragraph dealing with the makeup of the mound: "in some parts large stones predominated. Elsewhere marl had been used in quantity; in other places peat-all now full of bones and ashes" (Macalister *et al* 1914, 148). Another phase of activity was represented by a layer of "stones and rubble, devoid of remains" which overlay the slope of the mound right up to the inner edge of the inner ditch. This was seen as indicating that the presence of a palisade, or wall of dwelling, which on the line of the edge of the inner ditch, prevented the newly deposited stone and rubble layer from infringing upon the interior's occupation layers represented "by almost pure ash, full of bones..." (Macalister *et al* 1914, 148). With regard to the living surface on the platform there were no indications of any structures except for a small number of flag like stones set together, possibly the remains of a pavement. No post holes were detected, not to mention post pits, though at the so-called "landing-stage" a number of post holes marking the "site of vanished piles" were recovered. Two-thirds of the platform was dug down to its foundation of boulders and was found to contain soil permeated with ash and animal bones (Macalister *et al* 1914, 149).

The removal of layers on the north side of the mound revealed the afore-mentioned depression on the north side to be a passage lined on both sides with an irregular row of stones which the excavators suggested was "in all probability a landing stage" 3.66 metres in length and 1.52 metres in width (Macalister *et al* 1914, 149). This passage happened to be located on the side of

the wetland habitation facing to a high ridge of land situated a couple of hundred metres to the north of the site. A section was cut in the line of the passage and another at right angles to it at the place where it encountered the surrounding palisade or fencing and horizontal timber which was presumably the same enclosing structure which marked the inner margin of the secondary peripheral stone layer (Macalister *et al* 1914).

From the excavators' initial pre-excavation assumptions as revealed by archival material, and the conclusions that they had arrived at from their published investigation of the site, it is quite clear that they had classified the habitation at Loughpark as a crannog. In the various antiquarian journals of the day up to 1913, 115 articles of crannogs had been published (Hayes 1970, 587-91), along with a book written on the subject by Wood-Martin (1886) and these sites were generally understood to be habitations found in lakes, rivers and marshland, partially or fully artificially built with a variety of materials used such as brushwood, timber, clay, peat, stone, ash, bones and surrounded by a palisade. At the time that Loughpark was being excavated, archaeology was only beginning to grasp what was actually sitting in the Irish countryside with limited surveys being carried out by Thomas Westropp on the ringforts, promontory forts and megaliths in Munster, William Borlase on megaliths, W. G. Wood-Martin on crannogs, and Goddard Orpen on Anglo-Norman settlement. Their classifications were based on pertinent observations but the fieldwork on which they were based was spatially limited depending on the scholars' own financial and transport situation.

Rigid classifications were required to deal with the large amount of new information coming in though any variability in settlement form was glossed over. Macalister and whoever accompanied him were the sole publishers of Irish excavation reports for the first three decades of the twentieth century except for H. C. Lawlor who published two investigations. In this scenerio Macalister and his team were working in a vacuum of knowledge on the complex subject of wetland archaeology which today is a specialised field within archaeology itself.

The short period of time involved for excavating such an extensive area is an achievement that has been a feature of other excavations which Macalister carried out. Archaeologists have remarked that he went far too fast for a proper excavation at Carrowkeel, County Sligo, where in 1911 along with Armstrong and Praeger, he excavated seven small passage tombs in fifteen working days. His methods were more akin to Schlieman's trenching techniques at Troy rather than Pitt-Rivers carefully elucidated techniques (Mitchell 1985, 152; Godden 1993, 226). In the report of his excavations of Gezer which established his name in archaeology Macalister describes his ideal method of excavation as side trenching across the tell mound, putting unearthed soil into the previous trench stating that it was the only legitimate and scientific way to excavate (Godden 1993, 28). However, he discovered that he had neither the resources nor time to

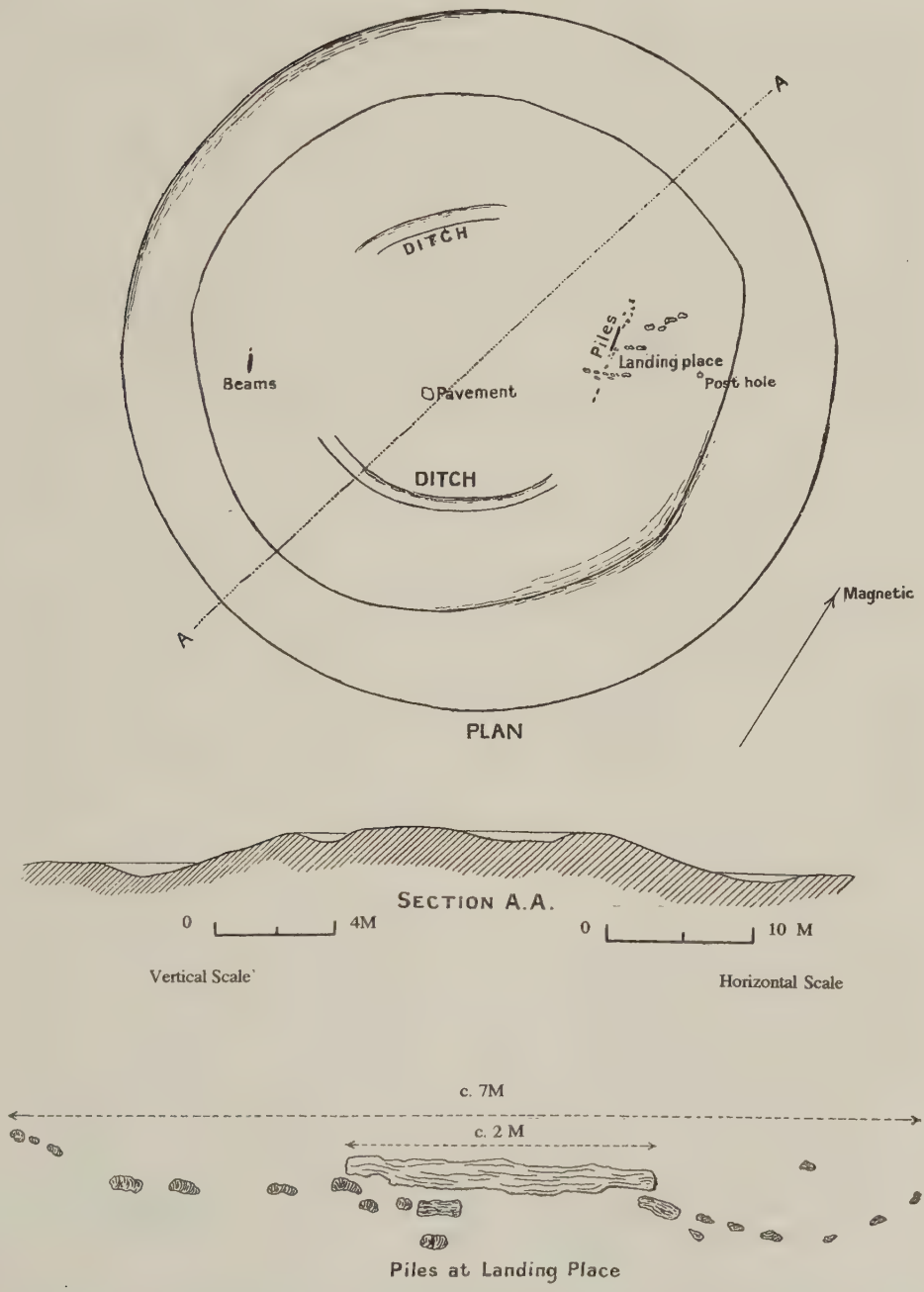



Fig. 2: Plan and section of Loughpark wetland site (Macalister *et al* 1914).

use this method, and he finally decided to cut a trench across the mound (Godden 1993, 24). This technique seems to have led to a misinterpretation of sites such as Loughpark.

Another excavation of Macalister's was examined by the Crannog Archaeology Project in 1989 (Kelly 1991, 89). This was the excavation on Cro-Inis, Lough Ennell, County Westmeath (Macalister 1938, 248-52; Godden 1993, 73) in which a mound of earth was dug for two days. He unearthed a building which he took to be shaped in the form of the frustrum of a pyramid, only c. 0.90 to c. 1.3 metres high. Inside was a square chamber with a small recess, but no artefacts were discovered. Macalister believed that he had unearthed a 18th century folly, perhaps used as a platform from which to shoot birds. He apologised to the Academy which funded the excavation for only having "this triviality" to report. Re-examination of the site suggested that this folly was in fact the remains of a late medieval tower house.

## THE ASSEMBLAGE OF ARTEFACTS FROM LOUGHPARK

### INTRODUCTION

Eighty seven artefacts made from various materials was recovered during the course of the 1913 excavation. Outside a knowledge of the detailed stratigraphy of a site it is difficult to date securely the construction and occupation of the wetland site at Loughpark. Despite this limitation progress in the amount of archaeological research over the years allows individual artefacts to provide the researcher with valuable information. Taken as a whole the articles of diagnostic value could have seen use sometime from the 10th to the 17th century, though the majority of artefacts elucidated below appear to indicate usage of the site in the earlier half of this date range.

### STONE ARTEFACTS, *figs. 3-5*

A number of stone artefacts were unearthed. These included whetstones which were used to sharpen tools (E54:1 to 8, E54:10 & F1932:18) a stone polisher whose function is unclear (E54:9) and three non-descript stone pebbles (E54:11 to 13) which the excavators identified as being "probably used as hammer stones" (Macalister *et al* 1914, 151). Whetstones are common finds on excavated sites of the early and high medieval periods in Ireland. Loughpark is no exception with ten examples of its own. The vast majority of whetstones recovered from sites are apparently made from sandstone with a few other types of stone used occasionally (O'Connor 1991, 48). The whetstones recovered from the Galway site were either (sub) rectangular shaped in plan and section or oblong shaped with rectangular shape tapering to both ends. With the exception of one finely made red jasper piece (E54:10) the rest of the whetstones were made from grey sandstone. Both types of rock are available locally (Dr Stephen Mandel, pers. comm.). Previous examination of the forms of the whetstones undertaken

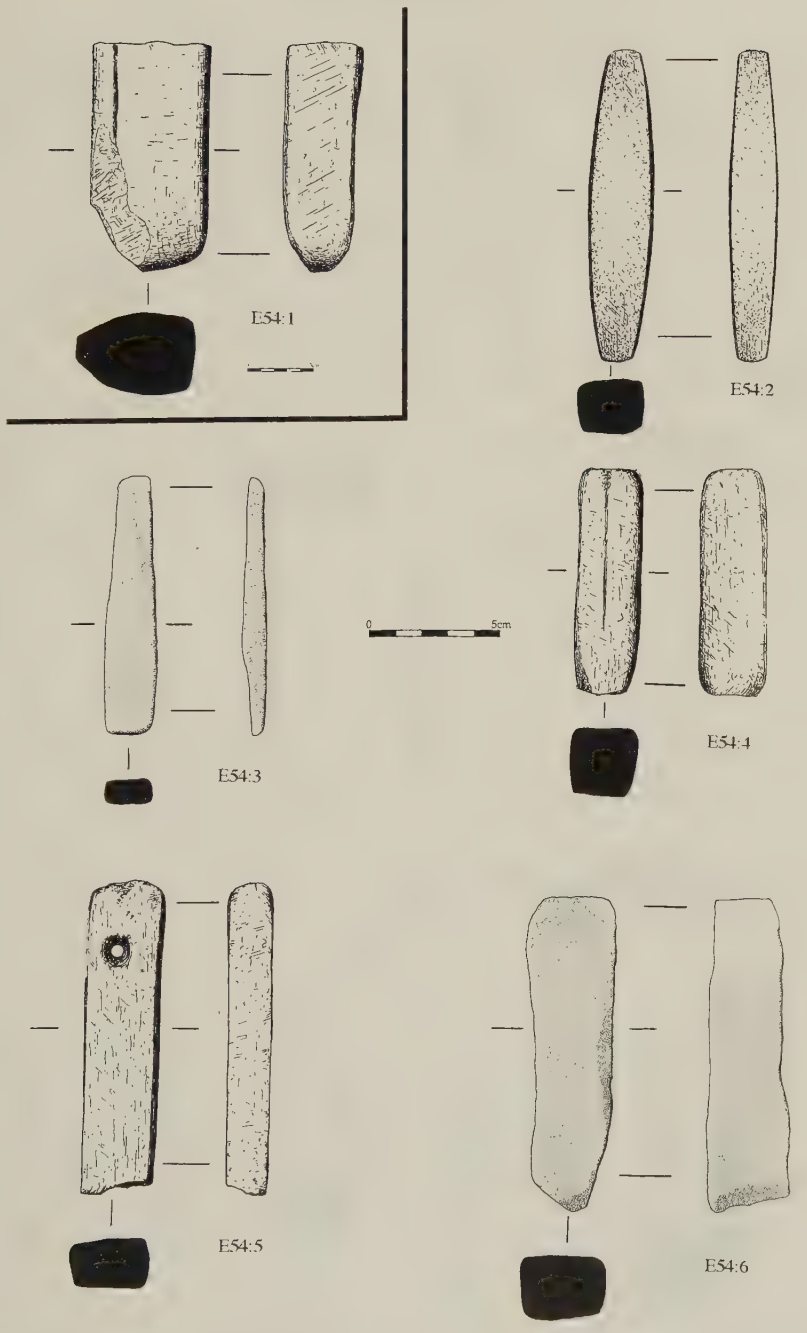



Fig. 3: Whetstones (after Macalister *et al* 1914).

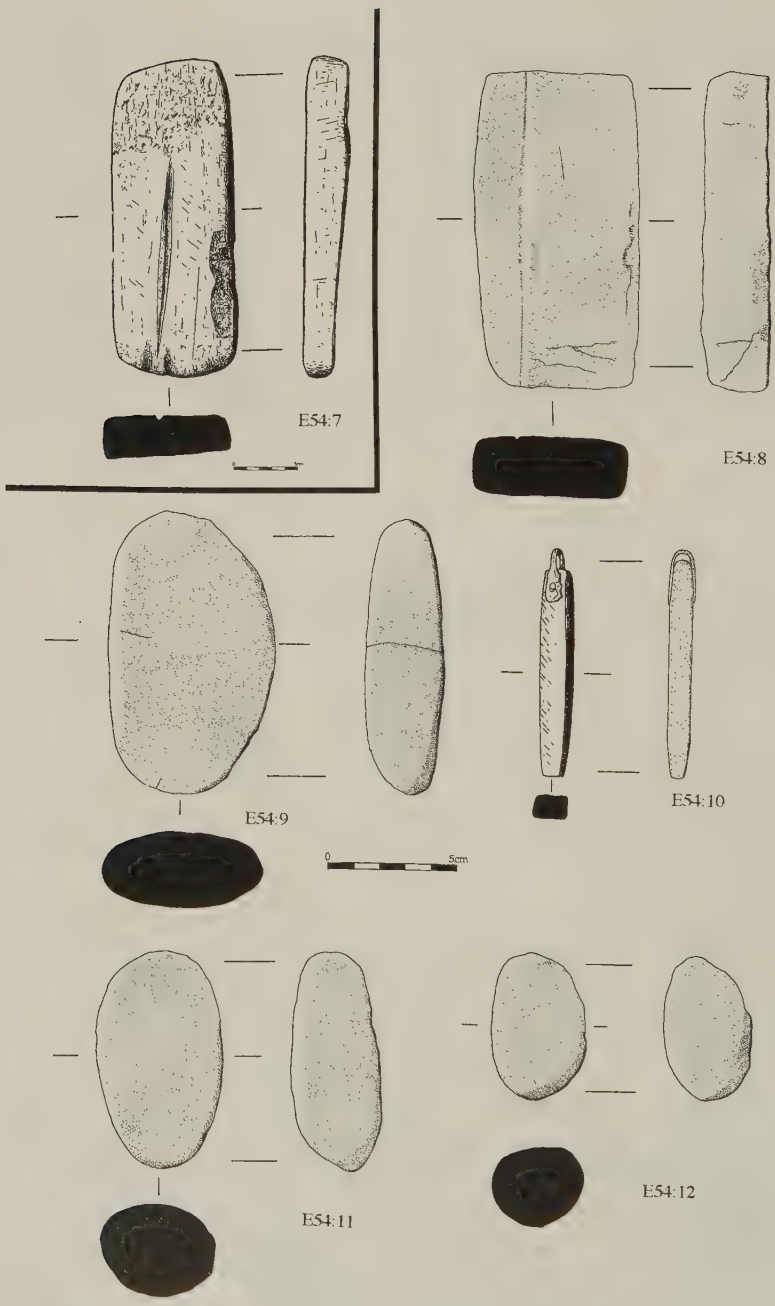



Fig. 4: Whetstones, miscellaneous (after Macalister *et al* 1914).

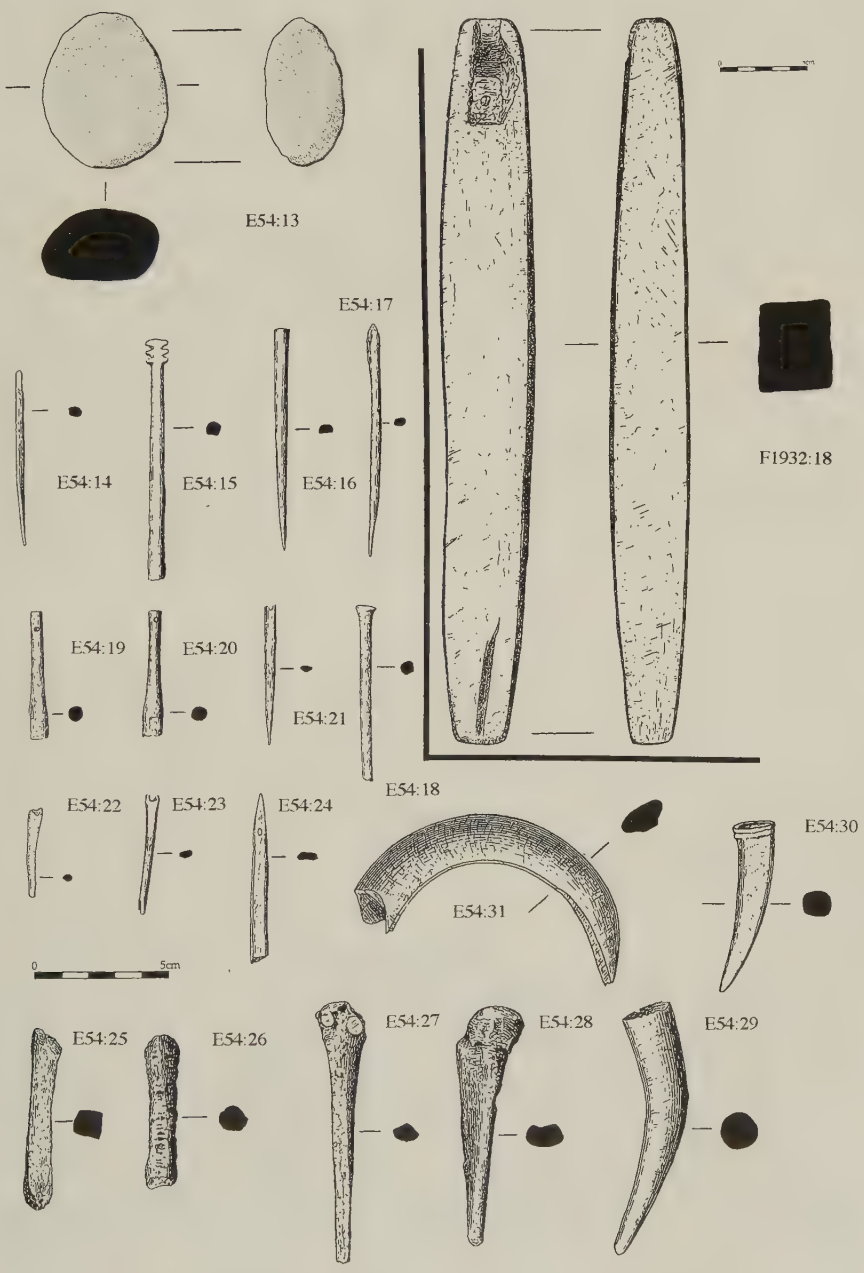



Fig. 5: Whetstone, pins, needles, miscellaneous (after Macalister *et al* 1914).

indicates a continuity from the early Iron Age through the early medieval period supplemented rather than broken by the introduction of new types by the Vikings (O'Connor 1991, 48). It is not surprising then to say that such a continuity in shapes and wear is still seen on medieval examples. Hence, the whetstones in Loughpark cannot be used to date activity on the site but the difference in sizes and shape may indicate different functional uses.

The jasper whetstone (E54:10) and the limestone polisher (E54:9) cannot be dated with any confidence except to say that they would fit into a medieval context. The whetstone is unusual in the Loughpark assemblage of whetstones for a number of reasons. Firstly, it is made of red jasper as the other examples are made from sandstone. Secondly, its small size and well polished surface made it of value as a bronze attachment was used to secure it. It is clearly set apart from the more mundane whetstones. A whetstone with decorated bronze attachment and hook of 10th century date was found on a crannog at Newtownlow, County Westmeath (Kelly 1991, 98). The excavators at Loughpark believed that the jasper piece was used as a touchstone for testing the purity of metals. The surface of the whetstone has stains on the surface which appear visually to be of silver and gold. However, the speculative identification of this jasper piece as a touchstone requires more indepth analysis before its identification is clarified.

BONE/ANTLER ARTEFACTS, *figs. 5-6, plates 3-4*

Loughpark produced five pins, four needles (E54:21 to 24), two tuning pegs, two unusual antler/horn objects, two combs and four non-descript objects of bone. The bone pins (E54:14 to 18) probably served the same function as the more attractive bronze pins. E54:15 is paralleled by a more finely made example found in Wood Quay in a 13th century context and is now presently exhibited at Dublinia, Christchurch Place, Dublin (E132:62527-N.M.I. catalogue). E54:18 is similar to a 'peg/pin' recovered at Kiltiernan, County Galway in a monastic site (Waddell and Clyne 1995, 180). It came from a layer deposited in the 11th to 12th centuries. Akin to E54:16 was the only bone artefact recovered from the excavations of the medieval town defences at Charlotte's Quay in Limerick (Lynch 1984, 316, fig.15). This was the shank of a polished bone found in association with two bronze stick pins, one of which was a stud headed pin which had seen use between the late 11th and the mid 13th centuries, and the other being too badly corroded to be identified. Bone pins and needles have been recovered from many excavations and this emphasises the continuity of form over the centuries. Four bone objects (E54:25, E54:26, E54:27 and E54:28) are non-descript both in terms of dating and function but there were a number of other bone objects which were recovered that can clarify the dating of the occupation.

Two tuning pegs (E54:19 and E54:20) were unearthed. They are of a Carew

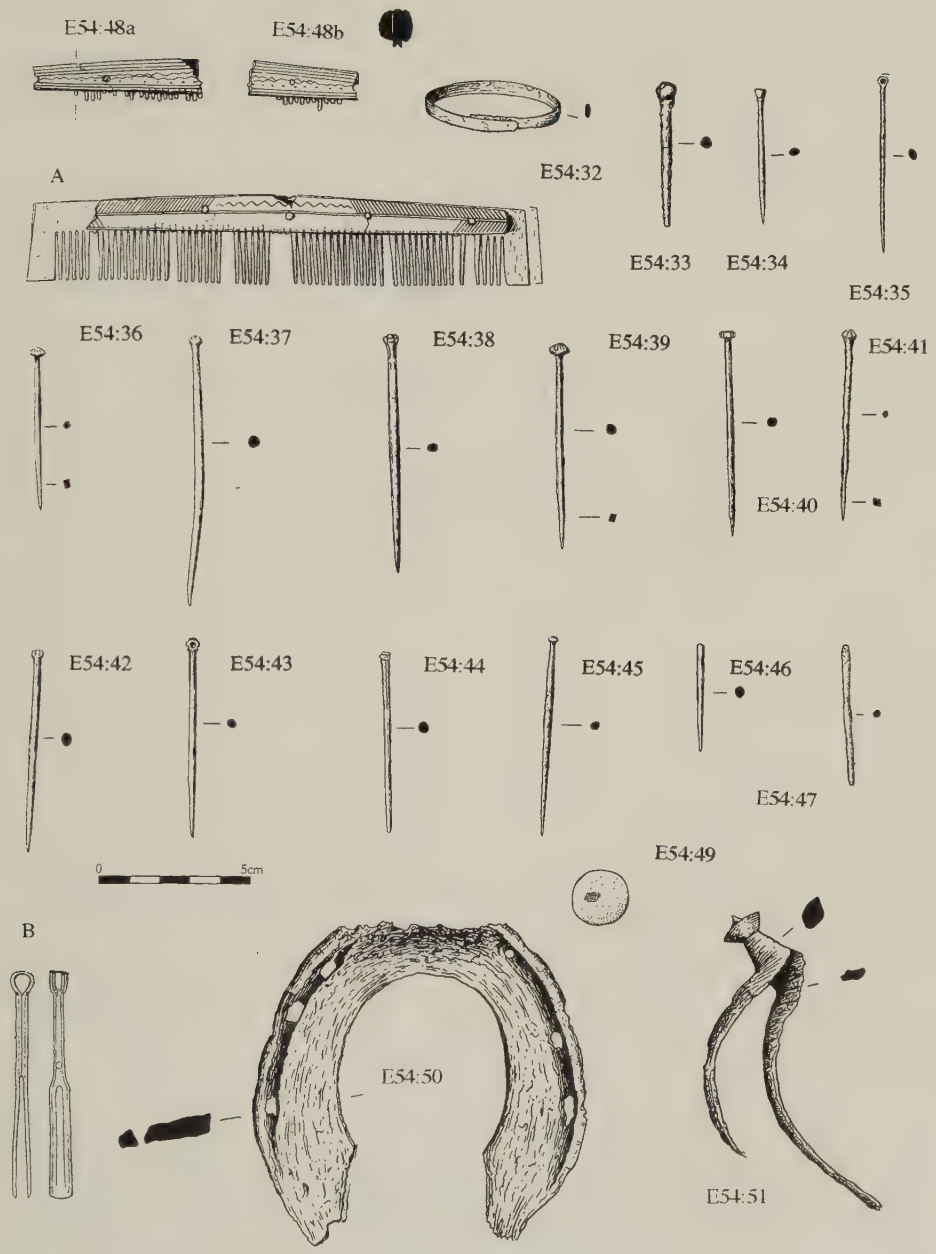



Fig. 6: Combs, bracelet, stick pins, ring pin, tweezer, horse-shoe, horse-spur, musket ball. (after Macalister *et al* 1914).

Class A type (Carew 1993, 69 & 101; Johnson 1995, 81, fig. 31:1). The Loughpark examples are paralleled by examples found in Cork and Waterford in both wood and bone (Mr. Maurice F. Hurley, pers. comm; 1997, 665-666). A similar type was unearthed in a 13th century level in excavations at Essex Street West in Dublin (Johnson 1995,81, fig. 31:1). A comparable peg was discovered in Clontuskert Priory, County Galway (Fanning 1976, 147-9) and may also have come from a small stringed instrument. There are similar examples from across the Irish Sea at Whitby, Yorkshire. Comparative material would now tend to suggest that they are more likely to date from the 13th century or later (Lawson 1978, 141; 1990, 713). MacGregor states that in no instance can an origin earlier than the high medieval period be demonstrated (1985, 146). Unfortunately, none of the Loughpark pegs were found with instrumental remains though it is possible that they were made for an instrument with an open superstructure, such as a harp, lyre or simple lute, and could be inserted and tuned from behind (Lawson 1990, 713; Johnson 1995, 81).

The antler/horn objects (E54:29 and E54:30) were problematic due to the fact that they were polished. This makes it impossible visually to differentiate between the two types of material. They are similar to some of the antler objects from Waterford which (Hurley 1997, 678-80) may have been used as phials or handles. The Waterford examples have a dating from the late 11th century to the mid 13th century. The antler/horn objects in Loughpark are probably more likely to be handles as the socketed space within the antler/horn objects is too small to contain a substantial amount of liquid though the surface of the socketed areas are very smooth showing no evidence of function in both examples.

The fragments of two combs were recovered (E54:48a/b and A) from which Dunleavy identified both as Class F3 and made of bone (1988, 366-7, 400). From the distribution pattern it would seem at present that this was a type of comb favoured by the citizens of Dublin in the 10th to 12th centuries. The Loughpark examples are also paralleled by Class F3 combs found in Cork and Waterford with dates concentrating on the 12th century. Some of the Waterford examples may be late 11th century. The dating of the Cork combs is more problematic and while it is likely that all the Class F combs are late 12th century, it is not possible to rule out their continued use up to the mid 13th century (Mr. Maurice F. Hurley, pers. comm.).

IRON ARTEFACTS, *figs. 6-8, plate 2*

Iron artefacts account for the vast majority of finds. Included are arrowheads, horse spurs, remains of a horse mouthpiece, knives, awls, nails, a horseshoe and some non-descript pieces of metal. Amongst the assemblage recovered from Loughpark, two arrowheads were recovered (E54:56 and E54:57) and the socket and stem probably of another arrowhead (E54:65). They are of a type classed by

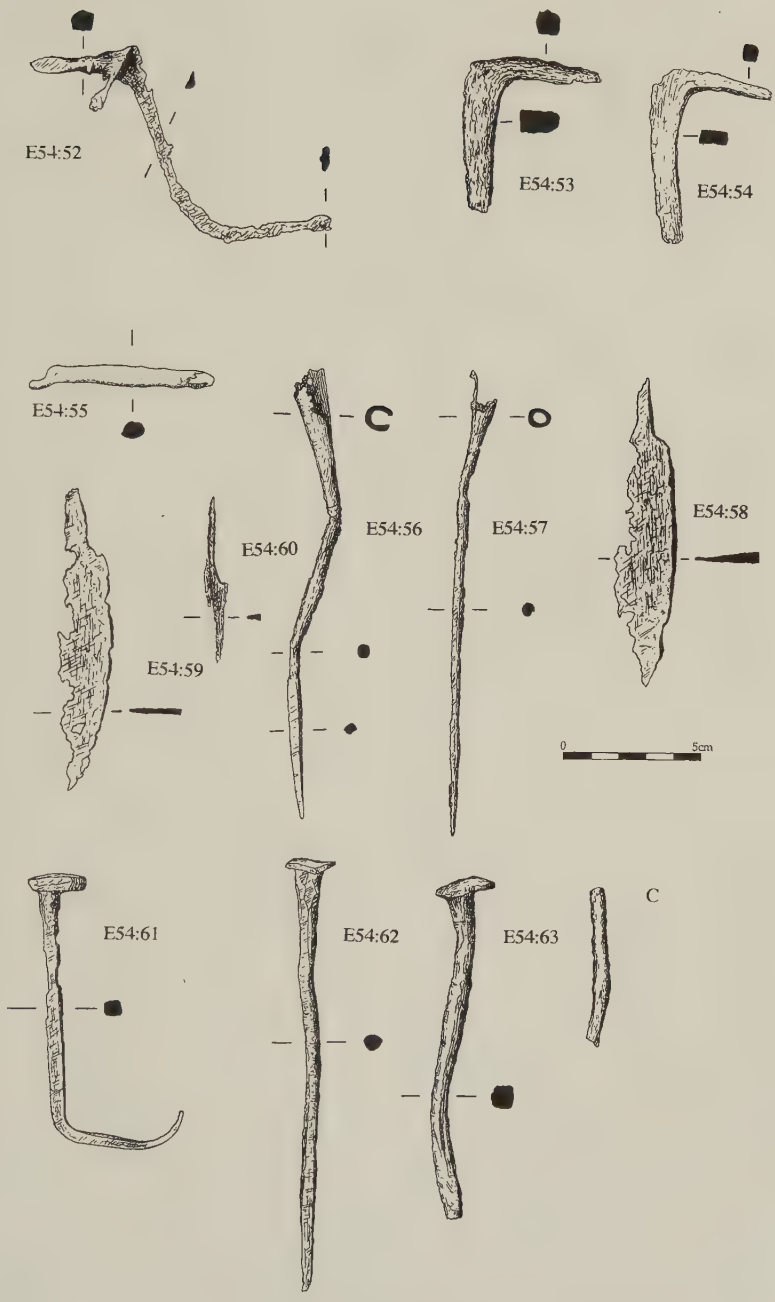



Fig. 7: Horse-spur, brackets, horse mouthpiece, arrowheads, knife blades, nails, miscellaneous (after Macalister *et al* 1914).

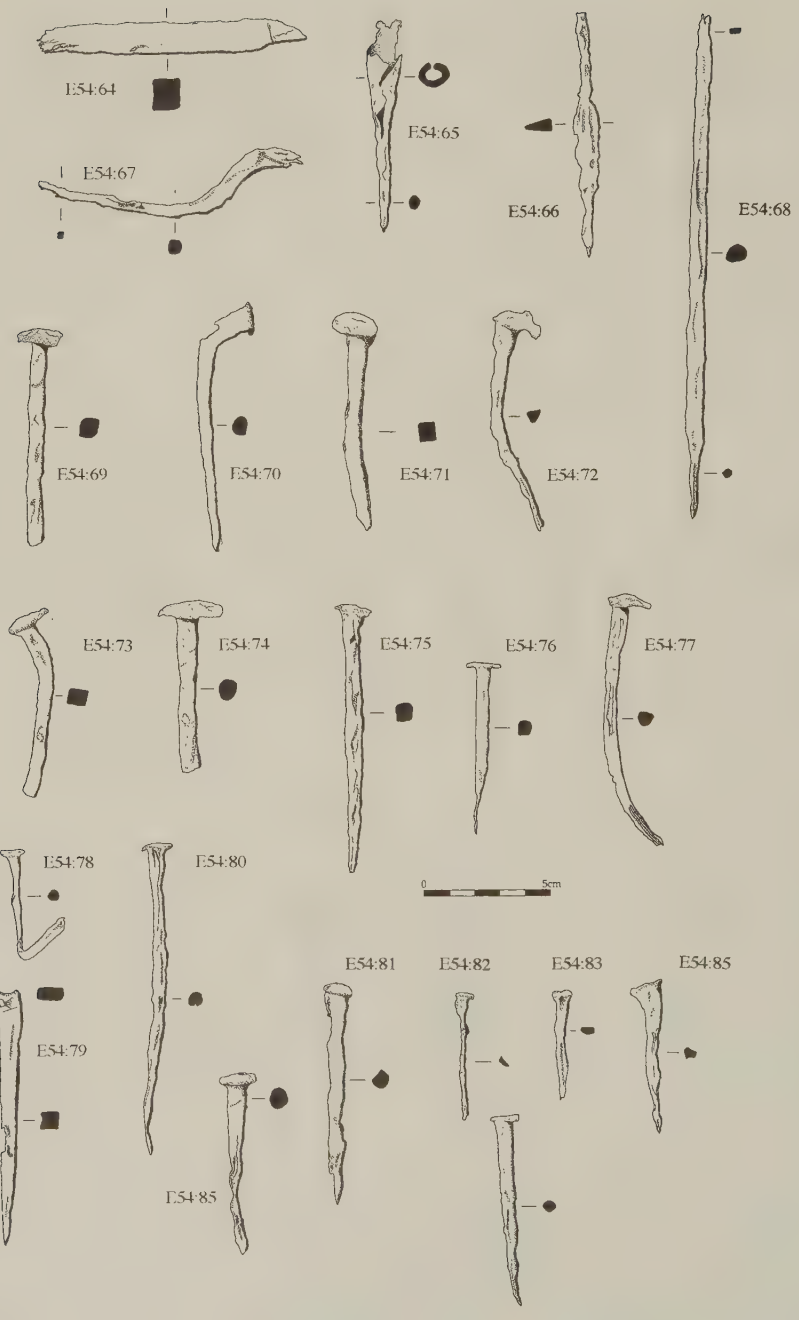



Fig. 8: Arrowhead, knife blade, awl/auger, nails, miscellaneous.

Halpin as Type 4a or socketed bodkin-bladed arrowheads. These arrowheads are defined by the possession of blades specifically designed to pierce defensive armour (Halpin 1983, 46). The dated deposits from which they come from are late 13th century at Clontuskert Priory (Fanning 1976, 131-2, fig. 11, no. 47), late 13th to early 14th century at Adare Castle (Sweetman 1980, 5), late 13th to early 14th century at Ferns Castle (Sweetman 1979, 237-8, fig. 10), late 13th to early 14th century at Trim Castle (Sweetman 1978, 177-8, fig. 23), and 10th to 13th century at Essex Street West, Dublin (Johnson 1995, 77). The bodkin-bladed type is undoubtedly a military arrowhead, used by the Anglo-Norman forces in Ireland, from the late twelfth century onwards. However, examples have turned up in pre 1169 levels in both Dublin and Waterford, though it is hardly possible, as yet, to distinguish between early and later forms (Halpin 1983, 47-8, 58; Johnson 1995, 78).

The Loughpark arrowheads have surviving external socket widths of 11mm (E54:56), 8.7mm (E54:57) and 14.6 mm (E54:65). The first two arrowheads would fit into a range of projectile heads whose sockets would be suitable for shafts fired by longbows which was the most common bow type taking the high medieval period as a whole. The third arrowhead has a surviving external socket width of 14.6mm and arrowheads which have socket diameters of 14mm or over may have been crossbow bolt heads. The dateable examples of these crossbow bolt heads are from the 13th century. It seems probable that a variety of bow types such as short bows, crossbows and longbows were in use before the longbow clearly established its superiority in the late 13th century in Ireland (Halpin 1983, 60).

The extent of the use of the bow among the Gaelic Irish community in the same period is unclarified. Historical references to the Gaelic Irish using bows are not easily confirmed by archaeology (Halpin 1983, 61). Arrowheads found in ringforts or crannogs are as likely to have been fired by attacking Anglo-Normans as to have been used by the Irish themselves and this stands for Loughpark as well. There is no distinctive Irish type of arrowhead identified as of yet and if the Irish did use weapons of similar form to the Hiberno-Norse or Anglo-Normans it is unlikely that there ever will be (Halpin 1983, 99). The use of the socketed bodkin-bladed arrowhead by the Hiberno-Norse from the 10th century onwards also confuses the picture but it appears from the documentary evidence that the Hiberno-Norse solely used the type as the Irish sources complain of their arrowheads being useless against the Norsemen's armour.

Two horse spurs, one of the prick spur type, the other of the rowel spur type (E54:51 and E54:52 respectively), were recovered from Loughpark. The prick spur probably saw use in the 13th century. During the 12th century, spurs with their necks formed almost entirely into large and quite heavy quadrangular lozenge-shaped goads were well known through out England and Western Europe. Some had sides which curved very slightly under the wearer's ankle, a

trend which increased until, by the mid-13th century, most sides were deeply curved as the Loughpark example is (Ellis 1995, 127). A close parallel can be seen from Fishamble Street (E132:6 3920) which came from an unstratified context (Kavanagh 113, 1988).

The earliest rowel spurs appeared during the 13th century, following the general form of the contemporary prick spurs which they were soon to replace (Ellis 1990, 1037; Oakeshott 1994, 277; Ellis 1995, 127) in the 14th century for general use. Many of the earliest illustrations of rowel spurs, which appeared more or less simultaneously in several parts of Europe, showed very small, slender spurs with deeply curved sides (like the Loughpark rowel spur) and small rowels. In Chartres Cathedral, France, one window shows them being worn by the Pharaoh as he drowns in the Red Sea and they also appear on the Charlemagne window, c.1230 (Ellis 1995, 128). In England, a rowel spur can be seen in the first Great Seal of Henry III dated 1218 (Stalley 1994, 223; Ellis 1995,128). The date that rowel spurs, indeed prick spurs as well, were introduced into Ireland is unclear. Stalley has argued for a terminus post quem of 1220 for the rowel spur depicted on the Cantwell effigy in Kilfane, County Kilkenny. However, Blair has rejected the 13th century dating by pointing out that the rowel spur on the Cantwell effigy has a distinctive form, the so-called 'chrysantheum' rowel type which did not become fashionable in Europe until the middle of the 14th century (Stalley 1994, 322).

Unfortunately, the rowel is missing from the Loughpark example but there are clues to its chronology. The fact that the one remaining arm has a rivet terminal is significant as this type of terminal to which the spur leathers were directly attached by rivets did not normally outlast the prick spurs, although an early rowel spur with rivet terminals from Castle Acre Castle is an extremely rare exception as terminals pierced with holes to accommodate seperate attachments for the leathers held to them by ring loops became usual (Ellis 1995, 127). This puts the Loughpark rowel spur as one of the earliest known examples of the rowel spur with a date of the early 13th century, though spurs in general being of fashionable importance, especially for the Anglo-Normans, meant that they could have been lost or broken for a considerable time after manufacture (Ellis 1995, 124). The same can be said for the prick spur that while having a mid 13th century background it is unknown when it went out of use. The fact that both spurs were found without their corresponding piece for the other foot suggests that they were discarded or lost.

It was pointed out that the riding habits of the Irish horseman were quite different from those of his Anglo-Norman counterpart during the medieval period from not using stirrups (Nicholls 1972, 84-5). Giraldus Cambrensis refers in his Topographia Hiberniae (O'Meara 1982, 101) to the Gaelic Irish not using horse spurs and this is illustrated in a 15th century depiction of the Kavanaghs meeting a typical English army of heavily armoured knights with no stirrups,

spurs or plate armour, wearing only chain mail (Smyth 1982, 107). However, there is a reference in the *Annála Ríoghachta Eireann* to a Gaelic notable stabbing himself with a spur in 1376 so the strict ethnic restriction of use does not hold (O'Donovan 1856, 665).

The link of a horse mouthpiece (E54:55), is directly comparable to the complete mouthpiece and two broken examples found at the ringfort excavation of Carraig Aille at Lough Gur, County Limerick (Ó Ríordáin 1949, 96-8, nos. 121, 163 and 236). These horse mouthpieces and the Loughpark example are of Ward Perkins Type II which has been noted as "proportionately commoner at the beginning than at the end of the Middle Ages" (Ó Ríordáin 1949, 98). The Carraig Aille I ringfort which produced the mouthpieces has been dated by the excavation to have been occupied between the 7th and 11th century though no attempt was made to date the actual usage of the "ancient" mouthpieces. Two comparable pieces have been unearthed at Fishamble Street (E190:3577 and E172:13768) dated to the tenth century (Kavanagh 109, 1988). Fragmentary remains of mouthpiece links uncovered at Winchester may possibly be of similar type. One is dated to the 11th to early 12th century while another saw use in the 12th to mid 13th century (Goodall 1990, 1043, 1045-6, nos. 38887 and 3889, fig. 334). There appears to be a continuity of types over the centuries, with Type II mouthpieces being used at least as early as the 10th into the 14th century. Much research needs to be carried out to clarify the situation as the surviving specimens are ".....bewilderingly varied in type, and it is hardly possible to do more than indicate the commoner forms and the approximate period of their use" (Clark 1995, 43).

Four knives in a fragmentary state (all whittle tanged, that is the tang was narrow and tapered to be inserted into the knife handle, as opposed to scale-tanged, where the tang is broad and flattened and the handle is riveted to the tang) were found at Loughpark - E54:58, E54:59, E54:60 and E54:66. Two of the Loughpark blades are too corroded to be classified but E54:58 and E54:59 appear to be of Type E which is a type defined by a blade back which is curved and has various cutting edges. This type has a broad date range, from the 10th to 15th centuries (Ms. O. Scully, 1997, 454). The typology is based on a classification outlined by Goodall (1990, 838, 841-5). Knives similar to the Loughpark examples are found in high medieval contexts but as the date range of Type E suggests these knives have been frequently found on sites like ringforts and crannogs of early medieval date, i.e Lisduggan ringforts (Twohig 1990, 16-7, fig. 7, no. 11). This makes any close dating based on these knives difficult.

An awl was recovered (E54:79). In the Waterford excavations the majority of tools found were awls or punches. They were probably used in leather working, either for making holes for stitching, or attachments. Awls or punches may also have been used for tooling leather. A second awl or possible auger (E54:67), was also recovered. Most of the Waterford awls are less than half the length of this

example and it was tentatively suggested that two awls of similar dimensions to the tool (E54:67) that concerns us, are in fact augers. The auger was basically used for boring or enlarging holes in wood. In Waterford the awls/punches have a date range of mid 11th to early 13th century, the dating of the possible augers is mid 12th to early 13th century (Ms. O Scully 1997, 469).

At the Galway wetland site the most numerous single type of artefact recovered were carpentry nails (E54:61 to E54:63, E54:69 to E54:78, E54:80 to E54:86) presumably used for the construction of the palisade and internal structures. There are two types of nails identified in Loughpark, the first group falls into a Type A category and the second into a Type B category that is used by Walsh (1997, 140-1). Walsh defines Type A as nails with circular, oval or subrectangular flat heads, with square or rectangular section shanks. Type B are nails with circular, oval or subrectangular domed heads, with square or rectangular section shanks. While the type of nails found at Loughpark are well testified in high medieval excavations, they also have turned up in early medieval sites like Ballinderry Crannog I where Type A nails were recovered. So other than coming from well dated stratified contexts nails in themselves are of no use for establishing chronological parameters (Hencken 1936, 130). The same can be said for two examples of iron brackets/hinge pivots, which were found on the wetland site (E54:53 and E54:54) but like the nails do not provide definitive dating for the wetland site at Loughpark.

There were two artefacts which were definitely late in the date range. The first artefact is the iron horseshoe (E54:50). According to Sparkes (1976, 17-20), it is of the keyhole type which saw use c.1650-1800. On the Loughpark example the fullering or deep grooving along the edge of the horseshoe only extends between the extreme nail holes in each branch. On shoes dating from 1700 the groove is continuous around the shoe. Thus, the Loughpark example was clearly in use during the late 17th century. Like other keyhole type horseshoes the Loughpark example also had a concave surface next to the foot and a convex surface on the underside. The number of nails, three on each branch also ties in with its late 17th century dating.

LEAD ARTEFACT, *fig. 6*

The other 'late' object is a lead musket ball (E54:49). Their appearance and composition do not vary over the period of their use from the 16th century to the middle of the 19th century when the spherical bullet was superseded by others (O'Kelly 1952, 55), hence, it is near to impossible to date them.

BRONZE ARTEFACTS, *fig. 6, plate 5*

The bronze artefacts recovered from Loughpark consist of ringed pins, stick pins and a tweezer. A "child's bracelet" (E54:32) which was recovered (Macalister *et al* 1914, 149) may possibly be a bronze ring of a ringed pin similar to two ringed pins, consisting of bronze rings and bone pins (Raftery 1969, 65). They belong to

the Ray Collection held by the National Museum, but unfortunately they did not come from dateable deposits. These two examples were recovered from a depth of c. 4 metres in Nicholas Street, Dublin in 1856. It is tentatively suggested that these two ringed pins are of a medieval date and that the ring (E54:32) recovered from Loughpark falls into the medieval date for activity on the site. E54:40 is a Stirrup ringed pin which utilises a crutch shaped head. According to Fanning (1988, 43-5) this class can be dated to between the late 11th to 12th century.

A number of bronze stick pins were recovered from the site at Loughpark (E54:33 to E54:39 & E54:41 to E54:45). The stick pin, whether it is made of bronze, bone or iron is among one of the most common personal artefacts recovered in excavations of early and high medieval sites (O'Rahilly 1973, 1). It can be proposed with reasonable certainty that these pins served the same function as the Ringed Pins, i.e. as dress fasteners or as hairpins. The swelling or expansion which is a feature on so many of the later pins from Dublin (i.e.12th/13th century), as well as on a number of stick pins from Loughpark (E54:36, E54:37, E54:38, E54:39, E54:41 and E54:45), was probably one method devised to prevent them from slipping. Their use as styli is not to be ignored but it is unlikely in view of the fact that they do not provide any erasing or smoothing element for the wax The suggestion that stick pins of both bone and bronze were used to fasten bags or parcels is interesting in the context of that both bronze and bone pins were found at Loughpark (O'Rahilly 1973, 5-6).

Bronze stick pins of the Stud headed, Club headed, Round headed, Spatulate headed (types A and B) classes have been identified at Loughpark though E54:46 and E54:47 were too fragmentary to identify. Indeed, O'Rahilly (1973, 38, 53 & 58) used the Loughpark bronze pin assemblage as one of her main sources of comparative material. According to O'Rahilly's research into stick pins from Dublin (1973, 53, 58, 68, 79) the Stud and Club headed pins were in use from the late 11th to the early 13th century, the Round headed class to the late 11th to the 13th century and the Spatulate types (both A and B) to the late 12th to the 13th century.

In the Waterford excavations the Stud head and Round head classes fit into the Dublin dates though there are slight differences in terms of decades for the other types. For example, the use of the Spatulate class is extended earlier to the early 11th century though the early 13th century terminus ante quem still stands and the Club headed class is also extended in use by a number of decades to the mid 11th century (Ms. O. Scully 1997, 439). Ring pins and stick pins have turned up in various contexts such as ringforts (Gowen 1992, 111), crannogs (O'Neill Hencken 1950, 70), castles (Sweetman 1978, 181-3), medieval towns (Simpson 1995, 75; Simpson 1994, 90; Walsh 1997, 135), and ecclesiastical sites (Waterman 1979, 44; Hodkinson 1994 171; Waddell and Clyne 1995, 175-7). It appears that these stick and ring pins saw usage over a wide area in Ireland during the early and high medieval period. It is possible that the archaeological

evidence indicates close similarities between Gaelic and Anglo-Norman forms of dress as there does not appear to be any preference in ethnic terms for these pins.

There was a tweezer (B), probably of bronze, which was recovered from the site at Loughpark. A number of tweezers were recovered from the Waterford excavations. There was no exact parallel to the Loughpark example though there was a similarity to a tweezer which was dated to between the mid to late 12th century. The Waterford and Loughpark examples have in common flat rather than pointed terminals, which was the norm for medieval tweezers. These simple forms predate the examples with slides (Ms. O. Scully 1997, 451). A similar type of tweezer was recovered from 13th century levels at Wood Quay and is now currently exhibited at Dublinia, Christchurch Place, Dublin (E132:97932-N.M.I. catalogue).

ANIMAL BONES AND WOODEN MATERIAL

The bone remains indicate a typical range of domestic animals exploited for their meat. They include cattle, pig, red deer, sheep or goat, and two to three species of birds. Some of the deer bones may have belonged to large stags and the presence of antler tips may indicate craft working on the site. Unfortunately. there are no detailed records of their study remaining and it is doubtful that they were kept in storage up to the present day. Piles and other wooden "objects" were recovered but the wood was in a very poor condition. However, it was noted that oak was the most common species with birch and willow also used. There is no record of any wooden implements as such being recovered (Macalister *et al* 1914, 151).

COMMENT

As suggested above the range of artefacts found at Loughpark on balance appear to have seen use in the earlier half of the second millennium A.D. The lack of stratigraphic information provided by the original report makes it impossible to ascertain the exact sequence of construction and occupation on the site. The platform at Loughpark may have been constructed in a single attempt to create a dry living surface in very waterlogged conditions but the possibility of more than one phase of occupation contributing to a build up of debris to create the profile of the wetland site at Loughpark as it was in 1913 is a viable alternative. Macalister's excavation techniques would not have allowed the differentiation of layers to provide a chronological sequence for the site except for the bland statement that the artefacts were late in date (Macalister *et al* 1914, 149-151). The fact that the most closely dateable artefacts indicate a 13th century date and that the rest of the artefacts (with the exception of the horseshoe and musket ball) comfortably fall into the same period offer a possibility of the construction of the site in the high medieval period. But it is just as logical to say

that Loughpark first saw its wetland dwellers in the preconquest period with some form of reoccupation in the 13th century. The fact that no pottery was recovered is significant. It may have been due to the excavators' techniques and that 'bad luck' played a part. Alternatively the main phase of occupation could have taken place in an early medieval context when pottery was not commonly used, and more rarely manufactured, in Ireland.

Pl. 1: Aerial photograph of the Loughpark wetland site (at top of photograph). (Photograph: Geological survey of Ireland)

## LOUGHPARK: A SUGGESTED RE-INTERPRETATION

### LOUGHPARK: CRANNOG OR RINGFORT?

Bearing in mind the limitations of the excavation report such as the lack of stratigraphy and the inconsistencies between the plan and section of the site, an alternative interpretation of the wetland dwelling at Loughpark can tentatively be suggested. The presence of the raised platform and the two concentric ditches indicate a close morphological relationship with a ringfort, *see fig. 2 & plate 1*, a type which in 1913 was thought to be safely within the realm of dryland archaeology. The outer ditch may be the result of the digging up of the topsoil to provide material for the makeup of the slight mound so as to create a dry platform for the inner ditch, timber defense and whatever possible structures were built inside. An investigation of the site by the author revealed it to have been recently bulldozed (October 1996) and the exposed underlying layers consist of the same marl boulder clay that the topsoil of the field is covered by and this may confirm the above suggestion, though an excavation would be needed to clarify this point.

Ringforts can be morphologically generalised as a circular or oval space enclosed by a bank(s) and ditch(es), or either. However, as Barrett (1980, 39-40) points out they are not an homogenous group as they can have considerable

variations in composition, dimensions and defensive systems. She elaborates that any field classification can have no significance in terms of functional or structural evolution but is of value in that it brings the field characteristics of ringforts into a manageable form allowing conclusions to be made concerning the sites within a specific area and providing information for comparative studies in other areas. Despite the basic simplicity of the ringfort, variations allow a certain overlap with other supposedly temporally and morphologically different monument types.

Bearing these complexities in mind and the limitations of the excavation report published by Macalister and his colleagues, it is a valid proposition, however tentative, to suggest that what is present in Loughpark is not a crannog but a type of ringfort for which there are surveyed parallels (O'Kelly 1942, 89; Prendergast 1959, 45; O'Dwyer 1965, 95-7). There are also excavations of wetland ringforts at Grange, County Limerick and Lacken, County Wicklow (Ó Ríordáin 1949, 126-39; O'Connor 1944, 53-60).

A site relevant to the discussion of Loughpark is in the townland of Antiville, near Larne, County Antrim where there was an investigation of a marshland habitation site which the excavator distinguished from crannogs. It consisted of a stone built rectangular house and souterrain lying within a circular ditched enclosure occupied during the early medieval period. The location is unusual in that it ignored the open boulder clay subsoil close at hand, a situation paralleled in Loughpark. The site was only prepared for habitation by the cutting of an enclosing drain and by the construction of a bank, though not making a complete circuit. The ensuing occupation of the interior was represented by a peat deposit, 0.32 - 0.64 m thick, which incorporated charcoal and animal bones. However, at one place only could any distinct occupation level be distinguished: in the south beneath a bank associated with the souterrain. Here the peat attained its maximum thickness and enveloped a discontinuous seam of burnt soil with scattered basalt and chalk blocks (Waterman 1971, 65-75). The description of the stratigraphy is similar in its alternate layers of peat, burnt soil and stone to the layers encountered in the platform of the Loughpark wetland site (Macalister *et al* 1914, 148).

Waterman believes that the reason why similar marshland habitations have not been recognised in greater numbers is probably due to the slightness of their surface indications. At Antiville, for example, it was the discovery of the souterrain which drew attention to the site, not the insignificant remains of the banks. Indeed, Loughpark itself was only discovered during drainage works which were being carried out nearby and had not been noted by the O.S.workers of the previous century (Macalister *et al* 1914, 147).

Sites such as Grange, Gorteen, Antiville, Lacken and Loughpark are situated in damp, waterlogged, apparently unfavourable locations yet the choice of these locations was deliberate especially in the case of Gorteen, Antiville and

Loughpark where more suitable soil conditions were close at hand. Waterman (1971, 75) states that the physical disadvantages of the site may easily be over stressed, however, and it is of interest to study some 19th century accounts of semi-underground dwellings excavated in the peat bogs of the midlands and west of Ireland (Ó Danachair 1956, 75-80). The above mentioned sites with substantial platforms, ditches and banks suggest occupation over a considerable period of time despite possible seasonal flooding.

## LOUGHPARK: A MEDIEVAL RINGFORT?

There has been considerable discussion on the use of ringforts in the second millennium A.D. Some researchers have viewed the evidence for the construction and occupation of medieval ringforts in the post 1169 period up to as far as the 17th century with scepticism. Stout believes that there were no medieval ringforts, stating that the evidence is archaeologically unsustainable with radiocarbon dating from the majority of ringfort excavations suggesting construction and occupation from the early seventh to late ninth centuries A.D. He sees the reference to abandoned ringforts in the *Topographia Hiberniae* by the 12th century writer Giraldus Cambrensis, as indicating the demise of the use of ringforts by time of the arrival of the Anglo-Normans (O'Meara 1982, 119; Stout 1997, 115). Also Stout (1997, 22-3) points out that the excavation of 'Thady's Fort' near Shannon airport, where the excavator suggested a post-medieval dating for the double-banked ringfort, has a stratigraphical interpretation which is unconvincing.

O'Keeffe (1996, 144) acknowledges there is *a priori* reason for thinking that ringforts continued in use in Gaelic held areas in the medieval period as there is no other settlement type that parallels it in numbers and visibility but he argues that a theory of medieval ringfort continuity insinuates a social and cultural stagnation from the end of the first millennium A.D. to the 15th century when towerhouses were adopted. He states that the historical reference in *Caithréim Thoirdelbhaigh* or 'The Triumphs of Turlough' written in the 14th century which mentions Donnchad Ó Briain building "a circular fort and princely palace of earth" sometime before 1242 (O'Grady 1929,i ,2; ii, 2) should be interpreted as a result of the renewed interest in Gaelic traditions which is strongly attested from the high medieval period rather than building an antiquated form of settlement. Lynn believes that the evidence derived from excavations allows one to assess the possibility of occupation or use of any individual ringfort (as a defended farmstead) continuing into medieval times at 5 to 15 % and for construction at 0 to 5% allowing for individual bias (Lynn 1975a, 30).

However, protagonists for the medieval ringfort point out that the vast majority of excavations have taken place in the east of the country which saw more intensive political and settlement change whereas it is in the west where the available historical and distributional evidence suggests continued medieval

occupation and construction (Barrett and Graham 1975, 36; Edwards 1990, 19). Even a critic of the postulated continuity of the ringfort like Lynn (1975b, 46) admits that it is possible that half the ringforts in the west of Ireland will prove on excavation to be medieval in date.

It has been suggested that there is definite ringfort continuity outside areas of Anglo-Norman colonisation, showing that the distribution of surviving ringforts in the area is negatively correlated with the areas of permanent Anglo-Norman control in Counties Meath, Louth and Wexford (Barrett & Graham 1975, 37-43; Barrett 1982, 92; O'Conor 1993, 252-53). Barrett and Graham (1975, 37) also suggest that on a more larger scale there is a greater density of ringforts in the western half of Ireland in comparison to the eastern part of the country which saw more colonisation during the 12th and 13th centuries.

O'Conor (1993, 253-4) believes that there are hints that the occupation of ringforts occurred in the 13th and 14th century. It is suggested that where tower houses occur within supposed ringforts there is a possibility that these ringforts could have been in use till the construction of the tower houses and in addition where tower houses are adjacent to ringforts there is also a possibility that the enclosure could have been replaced by the masonry structures. However, one should be cautious as it is not fieldwork but complete excavation which will ascertain whether there is any indication of medieval occupation, and indeed construction, of these ringforts associated with tower houses. In addition, rectangular house foundations in a number of ringforts may indicate not only early medieval occupation, the transition from round to rectangular houses being completed by the end of the 10th century (Lynn 1978, 37), but also medieval occupation. Again, excavation is required to shed light on the actual chronology of these particular ringforts with rectangular house foundations (O'Conor 1993, 255).

Unfortunately, following the Anglo-Norman invasion in 1169 A.D., research has tended to clarify the nature of the 'alien' elements introduced by the newly arrived colonists rather than providing many insights into the character of Gaelic Irish settlement (Barrett 1982, 79), partly due to the lack of administrative records. This lack of documentation has made it very difficult to identify the nature of Gaelic Irish settlement in the medieval period. However, from a number of references, it is possible that the ringfort was one element in the indigenous settlement pattern during the medieval period (O'Conor 1993, 255-7).

In an area of strong Gaelic control during the middle ages a structure which could have been seen by medieval contemporaries as a cashel was excavated in the hillfort complex at Rathgall, Co. Wicklow (Raftery 1970, 52; O'Conor 1993, 261; Long 1994, 238-42). The site consisted of the innermost enclosure of a multivallate hillfort which was dry built of granite rocks. Although it appears to be circular it is actually constructed in a series of straight lines resulting in what would be accurate to say a polygonal shape. A substantial reoccupation of the

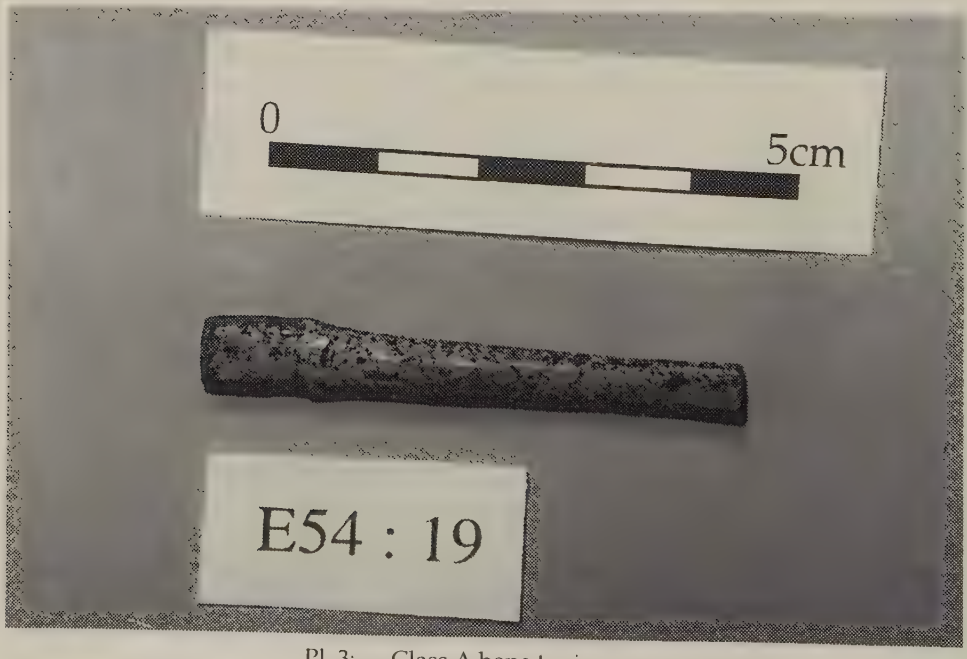
area both inside and outside the inner enclosure took place in the 13th and 14th centuries. Raftery concluded that the central enclosure was built in the medieval period or later from the examination of the site's stratigraphy.

From distributional, fieldwork, historical and excavation evidence, it would be unwise to dismiss outright the possibility that the occupation and indeed construction of ringforts continued beyond the arrival of the Anglo-Normans. It is important to note that the use of ringforts does not insinuate an inert Gaelic society using the same dwelling type for over a thousand years as it is important to point out that the ringfort may have only being one element in the Gaelic settlement framework. The political, social and economic situation of the Gaelic Irish in the 2nd millennium A.D. was very different from that of the earlier centuries and structures sharing the morphological attributes of the earlier ringforts may have been built under different circumstances though the use of the term 'ringfort' in discussion, which is a culturally implicit term, unfortunately, infers such social continuity. There is the possibility that within the context of feudal influences in pre-1169 Ireland that Anglo-Norman ringworks, which were being built in Britain may have influenced the retention of the circular enclosure as a defensive site. There is, at this time, a multiplicity of habitation types. The native Irish also occupied motte-like structures, akin to the raised or platform ringforts such as Gransha (Lynn 1985, 81-90), Big Glebe (Hamlin and Lynn 1988, 41-4) and Deer Park Farms (Hamlin and Lynn 1988, 44-7). Indeed, it is conceivable that mottes and platform ringforts fulfilled synonymous social functions (Graham 1988b, 114). The Irish also appear to have converted ringforts into mottes i.e. Lismahon (Waterman 1959, 139-76).

However, the argument for Gaelic construction of mottes has met criticism in that the Irish did not build mottes or even stone castles as it did not fit into their conceptual framework of warfare i.e. small scale raiding and the utilisation of mountainous and boggy landscape for defence as opposed to the contemporary European norm of large armies and sieges of major fortresses. A pastoral people, with no real nucleated settlements and quite insubstantial defensive settlements, living in a rugged landscape would have less need for large fixed fortifications such as motte and bailey castles or stone masonry castles (O'Conor 1993, 282). A study in medieval regionalism in North Kerry suggests that the upper echelons of Gaelic medieval society occupied dwellings of an insubstantial nature, built of materials such as wattle and clay (O'Connor 1990, 152-3).

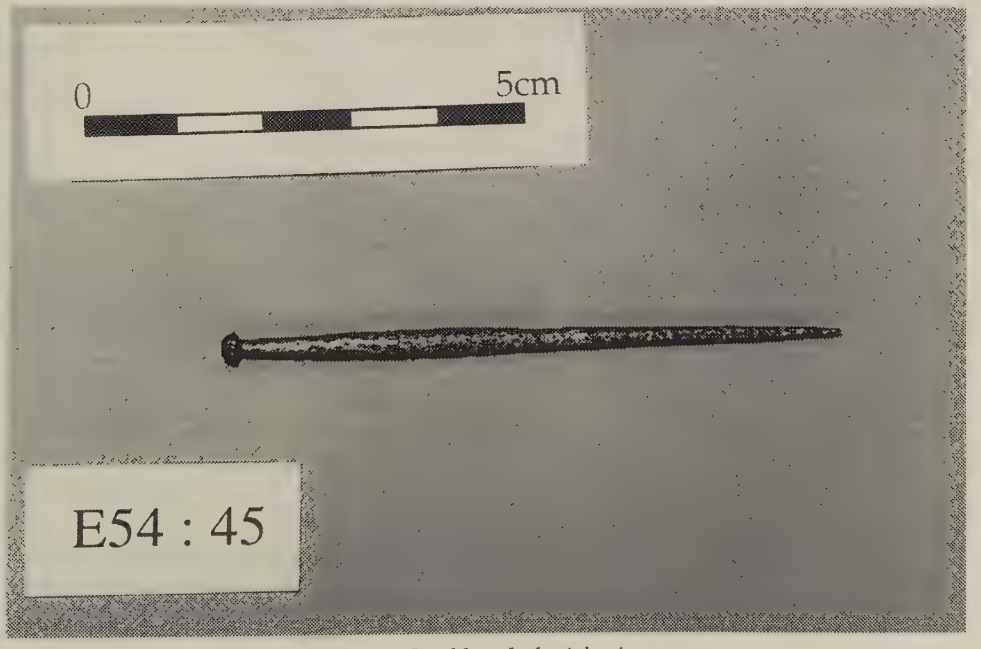
Various scholars such as Leask (1951, 6) have pointed out that there are references in the annals to pre-conquest castles in Ireland, being either called *caistel* or *caislen*. Eight of these sites have been recorded, most of the examples being in Connaught. The antiquarian description of the caislen site at Dunlo, Ballinasloe, County Galway has been interpreted as a description of a motte (O'Keeffe 1996, 145). However, O'Conor (1993, 210) believes that these eight sites are not consistently described as *caislen* or *caistel* in the sources as *longport* or *dun*

Pl. 2: The Loughpark arrowheads.




Pl. 3: Class A bone tuning peg.

Pl. 4: Fragment of Class F3 bone comb.




Pl. 5: Stud headed stick pin.
(Photographs by the author)

are also used to desribe them. He postulates using the examples of the *caislen* sites not only on Lough Cairrgin, (Ardnakillen Lough) County Roscommon but also in Dunlo that these pre 1169 castle sites represented nothing innovative from a morphological point of view. In addition, given the fact that there is some evidence for their survival during the medieval period and later, sites in the ringfort tradition are the best candidates for the morphological identification of the longport as well. This argument is further corroborated by the fact that no classic mottes or masonry castles, dateable to the 12th century, exists at the other six *caistel* or *caislen* sites. It is suggested that morphologically speaking these sites were possibly in the crannog and ringfort tradition. This corresponds in a general way to the field evidence, which indicates that South Leinster in particular and Ireland in general, that remarkably few castles, attributable to this period occur in historically attested Gaelic areas (O'Conor 1993, 262-4).

There are a few examples of Gaelic Irish building masonry castles, i.e. Connor, County Antrim but these appear to be exceptions rather than the norm, resulting from specific local pressures (McNeill 1997,157-64). Generally speaking, the Gaelic Irish lords avoided building stone castles. There is the possibility that the Gaelic system of inheritance which was not based on primogeniture but on kinship, militated against the large scale investment of constructing large defensive fortifications as the land on which the castle stood would have eventually passed onto another set of relatives and the builders would basically have to move out.

There is considerable evidence for the medieval use of crannogs in the post conquest period by the native Irish at sites like Island MacHugh, where medieval levels were excavated (Ivens *et al* 1986). The National Museum has within its collections a large amount of stray finds from crannogs which suggest occupation in the post-conquest period for at least some of these crannogs (Mr. E. P. Kelly, pers. comm.). The historical references are quite adamant that crannogs were used after the 12th century by the Irish up to the 17th century (Wood-Martin 1886, 145-56).

Apart from crannog references, there are additional references to *inis* sites which would in the most part appear to be crannogs though natural islands on both lakes and rivers were also utilised such as Inishtirra Island, Drumharlow Lough, Co. Roscommon where an almost square moated site with a large oval enclosure attached onto its northeastern side has been located, which has been identified as *Inis-Doighre*, a lordly residence of the MacDermots during the 14th century at least but probably also in the 13th century. This area of north Roscommon, according to historical evidence never saw Anglo-Norman settlement and the Archaeological Survey of Ireland, a branch of Dúchas, has identified a number of moated sites in areas of County Roscommon that never saw Anglo-Norman colonisation (O'Conor, forthcoming). This is in line with Graham's (1988a, 25 & 30) paper on medieval settlement in County Roscommon where he postulates Gaelic construction of moated sites.

## CONCLUSION

Hence, the archaeologist faces a conundrum when trying to identify Gaelic medieval settlement (1200-1600). In addition after c.1400 the tower house can be added to the list. In the context of Gaelic society both in terms of landownership and the type of small scale warfare carried out, large scale adoption of the more significant defensive sites that mainstream Europe saw being built may not have been necessary. However, other than the excavation of a ringfort that proves to have not only being occupied but more importantly built in the high medieval period, the onus of proof still lies with the school of thought which favours significant usage of ringforts in the high medieval period in Gaelic Ireland. While the above quoted evidence, which is admittedly limited, appears to suggest that ringforts saw usage in the high medieval period the bulk of current archaeological evidence holds that the Irish ringfort is an early medieval phenomenon. The collection of tools and personal accessories found at Loughpark suggest occupation of the site in the high medieval period and this may imply contemporary construction. Alternatively the ringfort at Loughpark could have been constructed earlier and the artefacts reflect reoccupation of the site possibly as a campaign stronghold. 13th century Connaught was the scene of numerous military transgressions between various Irish and Anglo-Norman lords, and the presence of arrowheads, particularly the crossbow bolthead, and the horse spurs could indicate usage of the wetland ringfort at Loughpark in such a scenerio.

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Note: Most of the artefactual drawings are taken from the original 1914 excavation report with the exception of E54:3, E54:6, E54:8-13, E54:22, E54:49, E54:55, E54:64-86 which were drawn by the present author. In addition the format of the original drawings was updated with the provision of cross sections.

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# THE FORTIFICATIONS OF WESTERN IRELAND, AD 1100-1300, AND THEIR INTERPRETATION

TADHG O'KEEFFE

Nearly a century has passed since Goddard Orpen, the distinguished historian of Anglo-Norman Ireland, and Thomas J. Westropp, a prolific author of papers on matters antiquarian, engaged in vigorous and intelligent debate on the origins and cultural contexts of steep-sided, flat-topped, earthen mounds, and earthwork enclosures.[1] Their exchange of ideas marks more than just the beginning of *castellologie* in Ireland[2]. Together, their papers constitute the germination of a discipline – the archaeological study of the high middle ages – which has only flowered in comparatively recent years[3], and their concern for reconciling evidence of contemporary documentation with evidence from the landscape is still the discipline's central philosophical concern. Orpen argued persuasively that in eastern Ireland motes, or mottes as we now tend to call them[4], were monuments of the Anglo-Normans, not native Irish sites as Westropp had claimed. Orpen did acknowledge[5] that some mounds of motte-like character, among them Magh Adhair near Ennis (Co. Clare), could be classified as 'ceremonial,' but in concluding his series of papers he wrote that he regarded as 'practically settled' the 'main controversy' surrounding the great majority of sites about which he had debated the question of cultural context with Westropp. The past quarter of a century, beginning with the publication of catalogues of mottes in the 1970s[6], has seen renewed interest in these earthworks, and, as will be discussed here, there has been fresh debate on some of the issues over which Westropp and Orpen had tussled.

Opinion has always been much less polarised on the ethnic and cultural contexts of stone castles. Architecture comprises many more variables lending themselves to classification and analysis than do earthworks, and the synthesis published by Leask in 1941 and kept in print ever since[7] remained acceptable in broad outline for more than half a century[8]. Excavations carried out at castle-sites in the north of Ireland since the 1950s, and in the south of Ireland since the 1970s, have added significantly to the pool of information, and the publications of these excavations contain valuable commentaries in which individual castles are contextualised. In the 1980s McNeill's work on Anglo-Norman Ulster in general and on Carrickfergus Castle in particular[9] introduced into Irish castle-studies the methodology and terminology used by English specialists[10], and

achieved a level of integration between history and archaeology comparable with that of Orpen's papers. The same concerns permeate McNeill's recently-published book on Irish castles[11]. This book, which addresses the need, long-expressed mantra-like by medievalists, for 'a new Leask', bookends a century which began with Orpen's compelling pro-Norman arguments. Its appearance provides a *fin-de-siècle* opportunity for reflecting on how far the study of castle-history and castle-design has developed in Ireland over nine decades.

Ideas which have emerged in recent years about castle-types, the ethnic origins and cultural affiliations of castle-builders, and the stylistic affinities of individual structures and of groups of structures, are critically reviewed in this paper, and it is suggested that there is a need for a rethink of some ideas which are now in vogue. The geographical scope of this review is wide, but special reference is made here to the interpretation of evidence west of the Shannon, an area of Ireland which saw partial incastellation by both Gaelic and Anglo-Norman aristocrats between *c.*1100 and *c.*1300. Some issues pertinent to parts of Ireland other than Connacht are also discussed here in the expectation that advances in our understanding of castle-building elsewhere in Ireland will eventually inform our knowledge of castle-building in Connacht.

## THE HIDDEN PEOPLE

The unsuccessful lobby nearly thirty years ago to have Athlone Castle demolished on account of its perceived symbolic enshrinement of Ireland's colonial experience[12] suggests that for some of us reconciliation with our past is best achieved by destroying certain elements of it. Cultural landscapes are data-banks of individual and shared memories, and those landscapes, distorted by the contemporary lens through which we view them, are touch-stones of national identity, or agents of provocation to perpetuate historical bitterness. The medieval castle, we can be certain, is the one element of the historic landscape of Ireland and Europe which was intended at the time of creation to polarise responses among those who viewed it. The fate which, by conscious action, might have befallen Athlone Castle three decades ago, and which has by sub-conscious action befallen other castles – when did superstition ever save a castle from destruction? – might be regarded as a measure of the monument type's symbolic durability; in truth, however, it is testimony to the durability of the idea that Ireland was invaded and colonised in the middle ages, and that the castle is partly to blame for it.[13] Our sensitivity to artefacts in the cultural landscape is selective, and this reflects a somewhat irrational view of our own past. The effect of the 'invasion' of eight centuries ago may have been less cataclysmic than the arrival many centuries earlier of a horse-riding aristocracy, their immediate ancestry in France and England, who were equipped with a material culture more sophisticated than that which the indigenous population possessed, and who seem, like the Anglo-Normans, never to have achieved dominance over the entire island. These were the Celts[14], and they, in contrast to

the Anglo-Normans, have enjoyed a glamourous reputation over the past two centuries.

Whereas the study of Celtic archaeology, like that of prehistoric archaeology, has long been established in Ireland, the archaeological study of Anglo-Norman and late medieval Ireland is a very recent phenomenon indeed. Barry, author of a general textbook, described it in 1987 as an area of study still in its infancy[15]. The comparatively recent development of a discipline devoted to the middle ages might be regarded as a manifestation of a cultural or political estrangement from medieval colonial society: almost twenty years ago Graham wrote that Irish historiographical research was prey to a nationalistic tendency which regarded Ireland as unique both ethnically and historically, and that arising out of this was 'a fairly simple desire to emphasize the Gaelic contribution to cultural development whilst diminishing that of the colonists'[16]. But archaeological study of the high middle ages has been firmly focused, almost from the beginning, on the colonial world, and it has left the Gaelic achievement under-represented and the medieval Gaelic population disenfranchised. Given that the birth of medieval archaeology is almost as recent a phenomenon in England – which has never seen a strident Anglo-Saxon nationalism – as in Ireland[17], it is probable that its emergence as a discipline is in large measure a product of the liberation of archaeology in the 1960s from prehistory, and with that the recognition that archaeology could do more than simply write a story for people who did not write their own stories.

If Anglo-Norman Ireland now enjoys vibrant scholarly debate among archaeologists as well as historians, archaeologists have yet to begin a systematic trawl of the landscape for evidence of Gaelic Irish society. These indigenous people occupied the frontier of medieval Europe; their archaeology still lies beyond the frontier of visibility. In the 15th century we recognise wealthy Gaelic lords by their tower-houses and by the ecclesiastical foundations for which they provided patronage, but their contemporaries of lower social rank are largely invisible, as is the entire spectrum of Gaelic society in the 13th century. Exploration of this seemingly intractable problem lies beyond the scope of this paper, but a comment might nonetheless be offered here on the possibility that ring-fort construction continued into the second millennium AD, particularly in areas – parts of Connacht, for example – where Anglo-Norman settlement was thinly spread. Attractive as this model is, the results from ring-fort excavations continue to point overwhelmingly to the first millennium AD as the period of construction.[18] Some ring-forts were later reused[19], but that pattern of reuse might be regarded *in most cases* not as a cultural phenomenon but as simple expediency: some of the sites discussed below in the context of an analysis of the 'ringwork' concept, for example, comprise tower-houses inside earth-banked enclosures which probably had been ring-forts. Donnchad Ó Briain's 'circular fort and princely palace of earth' at Clonroad near Ennis (Co. Clare), newly-

constructed in 1240[20], was certainly exceptional, but bearing in mind the fact that somebody went to the trouble of describing it, one might make an iconographic interpretation of this monument: its form referred deliberately to pre-Norman tradition, and it thus manifested the renewed interest in Gaelic traditions, among them inauguration rites and art styles, which is especially well-attested from the 14th century[21].

Much of the evidence on which the conventional chronology of ring-forts is based has been collected in the north of Ireland. Systematic excavation in the west and south-west of Ireland, conducted in tandem with historical research, may yet yield different results, but one can confidently predict simply on the basis of what is already known that the percentage of sites built *ab initio* in the post-1000 period, or occupied continuously into that period from before 1000, will be found to be low. In view of what we now know of the increasing militarisation of society at the turn of the millennium, it might be suggested that the fall-off in ring-fort construction around that time, if not also the actual abandonment at that time of many ring-forts which had successfully served generations, was a consequence of incipient feudalism[22].

## CASTLE-BUILDING IN WESTERN IRELAND IN THE LATE 12TH CENTURY: FEUDAL POWER AND GAELIC SOCIETY

The equation of castle-building with feudalism is as old as the discipline of castellologie itself. The snail's pace at which pre-Norman feudalism has come to be recognised in both England and Ireland has traditionally restricted our vision of the castle as a purely Norman phenomenon[23], thus leaving the aristocrats of both pre-Norman societies disenfranchised. Some small blame must be apportioned to the mouthpieces of the contemporary alien aristocracies, Orderic Vitalis and Giraldus Cambrensis, one observing that the late Anglo-Saxon landscape had few of the fortresses [*munitiones*] which the Gauls called castles [*castella*],'[24] and the other telling us, a century later, that the Irish cared little for castles [*castella*][25].

The use by native chroniclers of the terms *caistél* or *caislén* to describe a small number of early 12th century fortresses appears to signpost a consciousness in pre-Norman Ireland of the language of contemporary European feudalism[26], and to counter Giraldus's testimony. But the places at which the term is used, however, are comparatively few in number, and are mainly found in western Ireland. In 1124 the term *caistél* first appears with respect to foundations of Toirdelbach Ua Conchobhair at Galway [Gaillim], Colloony [Cúl Máile] (Co. Sligo) and Ballinasloe or Dunlo [Caistél Dúin Leódha] (Co. Galway). Athlone [Áth Luain] (Co. Westmeath) had a *caistél* in 1129, while Ardnakillen Lough [Loch Cairrgín] (Co. Roscommon) and Tuam (Co. Galway) each had a *caislén* in 1136 and 1164 respectively[27].

Williams has interpreted the use of *castel* in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* in 1051 as evidence of 'something new' in the landscape of Edward the Confessor's

England, something needing 'to be described in the tongue of the foreigners [*welisce menn*] who built it'.[28] Is the same interpretation valid for Ireland? Should we restrict the use of the term 'castle' in pre-1169 contexts to those monuments described specifically as such in contemporary accounts?

As in late Anglo-Saxon England, where *burh, geweorc* and *herebeorg* described fortifications[29], there were other terms to which pre-Invasion Irish chroniclers could resort in describing types of fortresses. In 1124, for example, Toirdelbach Ua Conchobhair had a *mórlongphort* close to Limerick at Woodford [Áth Caille][30], and another in Ormond in 1126 and 1127; other Irish kings such as Diarmait mac Murchada and Cormac Mac Carthaig had *longphoirt* also[31]. Another word in use was *daingen*: Brian Bóruma is recorded as having built *daingne* and *cathair* about the year 1000[32], while Athlone had its *daingen* (probably the same monument which was described as *caistél* in 1124) destroyed in 1153[33]. A more frequent term is *dún*. A number of Ua Conchobair fortifications in Connacht were so-named: Ballinasloe or Dunlo [Caistél Dúin Leódha], mentioned in 1124, is the most interesting of these because its name combines both *caistél* and *dún*[34], but there is also Doon [Dún Mughdhorn] (Co. Mayo), Dunmore [Dún Mór] (Co. Galway), and Dunnamon [Dún Imgain] (Co. Roscommon)[35].

The decision of some contemporary chroniclers to use *caistél* or *caislén* to describe some monuments might reflect the political-physical peculiarity of those structures, but the boundaries between the terms may well have been ill-defined. The castle at Ballinasloe, for example, known as both a *caistél* and a *dún* suggests that the distinction between words may have occupied minds much less in the middle ages than it does now[36]. Indeed the use of *caistél/caislén* might actually be diverting us from realising the extent of castle-building by implying that monuments with other names were not really 'castles'. If we concede that feudalism is a meaningful construct[37], that the private fortresses of feudal societies should be called castles, and that Ireland was feudal for two or three centuries prior to 1169[38], then every private fortress of the era might be considered a castle, regardless of the contemporary terminology used, and indeed regardless of physical form.

By that simple equation we free ourselves, as archaeologists, from what is in danger of becoming a question of semantics, and we can turn instead to the morphology of these fortresses and fortified high status residences in pre-Norman Ireland. The now-destroyed Caistél Dúin Leódha was described in 1709 by Molyneux as 'a Danesmount, with a large trench round it: 'tis almost so flat one might almost take it for a fort'. 'Danesmount' was Molyneux's term for a high, motte-like mound, and the description of the top of the mound being flat supports the identification of this as a motte-like earthwork[39], comparable with the motte-castles of contemporary England and Wales. At Dunmore (Co. Galway) the great mound surmounted since the mid-13th century or later by an Anglo-Norman tower, may well be, as Graham has suggested, the 'Dún Mór'

demolished in 1133[40]. The elevation of Caistél Dúin Leódha and Dún Mór would have made their defence easier and would have allowed those within a better view of what lay outside. But the symbolism of elevation was probably as important, and while it is likely that these sites were elevated in emulation of mottes elsewhere, it is not inconceivable that their elevation was motivated principally by a desire to distance them morphologically from the standard ringforts of the pre-feudal age.

Whether other 'castles' of the era in western Ireland were of comparable form is not known, but mounded settlements, motte-like in form and dating from the immediate pre-Norman age, are known archaeologically in the north of Ireland[41]. Knox listed a number of monuments in western Ireland which may prove on excavation to be related to Caistél Dúin Leódha and Rathmullen[42].

## ANGLO-NORMAN RINGWORKS: THE 'PILTDOWN MAN' OF IRISH MEDIEVAL ARCHAEOLOGY?

One cannot separate the motte-castle and the debate on its cultural affinities from the so-called 'ringwork-castle' which, according to what is evidently a new orthodoxy, was an alternative to the motte-castle[43]. The terminology makes it immediately apparent that this is an archaeological construct: unlike 'motte-castle' and 'castle', which have genuine etymological connections to the middle ages, this is a term of modern creation giving prominence to what is perceived to be the principal morphological element, an earthen-banked ring. Ringworks are, by any morphologiocal definition, very similar (if not indistinguishable from) native Irish ring-forts. Although Derek Renn had identified examples in Ireland thirty years ago, credit for introducing the idea into the consciousness of Irish archaeologists is normally given to the late Dermot Twohig. Barry gave the idea wider circulation in 1983, adding suggested new examples to Twohig's list, many of them based on new readings of excavated evidence, and again in 1987 when, in his general synthesis, he published a list of forty-five 'possible' sites[44]. By 1992 the number of 'possible' sites had risen, by O'Conor's estimation, to sixty-three[45].

It was in the context of a perceived gap in the distribution of mottes that the presence of ringwork-castles in Ireland was first suggested: because parts of Ireland successfully colonised by the Anglo-Normans appear not to have been fortified with motte-castles (Connacht, for example), it was argued that a different type of fortification must have been deployed, and the ringwork-castle, by virtue of its apparent reality in the colonial homelands of England and Wales, was the obvious 'missing link' candidate[46]. In 1988 McNeill, who had identified Mount Sandel (Co. Derry) as an example[47], warned of the danger of attempting to find examples of a site-type which is not easily distinguished morphologically from the ring-fort, and he suggested that an historical record of an Anglo-Norman fortification should be a prerequisite to ringwork identification[48]. In a short article in 1990 the present author expresed reservations about the idea that

ringwork castles were used in places where mottes were absent, and queried a number of the ringwork identifications offered by other writers[49]. In *Castles in Ireland* McNeill has not acknowledged the sites identified in Barry's 1987 map – an indication, perhaps, that he does not accept many of the identifications – and instead has concentrated his fire on the problem of distinguishing between ring-forts and ringworks[50]. One wonders, however, if this will halt what he has accurately described as the 'hunt the ringwork' tendency among those who are favourable to the idea in principle and who feel that the problem of identification based on morphology is an archaeological problem rather a problem fundamentally about the monuments themselves.

The ringwork idea needs to be debated. If the seventy or so examples now suggested by various authors are authentic military fortifications of the Anglo-Normans, and if the rate of identification of new sites continues, we may be drawn towards the conclusion that the colony was more heavily fortified and more densely settled than was believed to be the case a quarter of a century ago. There are other implications. If the same term 'ringwork castle' is legitimately used to describe these seventy (and more) monuments, we may have made a break-through comparable to that of Orpen nine decades ago with, on one hand, the demonstration of the existence of a castle-type of which the Anglo-Normans were conscious and which they understood to be an alternative to the motte-castle, and with, on the other hand, the potential for the discovery of an Anglo-Norman presence in places where the extant historical documentation does not preserve a record of them. By the same token, however, we can see how far astray we could be led if the ringwork identifications are in error.

There are sites in Ireland which fit the model devised by King and Alcock for England and Wales[51], but this writer would argue that a significant number of the ringwork identifications now in print are simply incorrect, and that many more of the identifications have not been supported by archaeological and historical evidence. A number of sites might be selected from the list published by Barry in 1987[52] to illustrate the lack of rigour in the identification of this alleged monument type. Rahinnane Castle (Co. Kerry) is a tower-house (15th century) inside a substantial ring-fort, complete with a souterrain through its rampart; the ring-fort may have had its defences recut when the tower-house was built, but there is no evidence that the site's morphology was in any way altered in the 12th or 13th centuries. Raheen Castle (Co. Limerick) and Dundonnell Castle (Co. Roscommon) appear also to be examples of the re-use of ring-forts in late medieval or early post-medieval times; there is a possibility that the earth-banked enclosures are contemporary with the late stone-buildings[53], but there is no evidence that those enclosures are 12th or 13th century in date[54]. At Béal Ború (Co. Clare) the tip-lines of dump material, and the ramp into the interior of the enclosure, are together consistent with O'Kelly's identification of the monument as an unfinished motte on an earlier, historically-recorded, ring-

fort. Adare Castle (Co. Limerick) poses a particular problem: the argument made by Westropp that the moat around the castle was a ring-fort may be refuted, but did the roughly circular enclosure at Adare have a life prior to, and independent of, the stone castle? The same question might be asked of Ferns Castle (Co. Wexford): if, in the process of building a stone fortress, the builders first dug a ditch around the space in which they intended to erect their stonework, does that *preparatory* phase qualify as a ringwork castle? The same question may be asked of Parkavonear (Co. Kerry) where there is a cylindrical tower, possibly early 13th century, standing within an earthen enclosure. Indeed, that enclosure is of rectangular plan, and while it is likely to be Anglo-Norman in date, the term ringwork is not an accurate description of it. The earthwork on which Shanid Castle (Co.Limerick) stands is a classic motte with an attached bailey. When an earthwork at Clonard (Co. Meath) was published in 1978 as a 'ringwork' that term had not yet acquired a specific cultural-functional meaning. The earthwork in question was trapezoidal in plan, low-lying, and with its interior raised only slightly above ground level, and finds were of late 13th or early 14th century date. It is listed as a ringwork by Barry. Nearby is the authentic site of Clonard's Anglo-Norman castle, a massive motte-and-bailey. The site Dungar (Co. Offaly) which Barry published as a ringwork in 1983[55] has the morphology of a ring-barrow, a burial monument of late prehistoric date.

Sites have been also assigned to the ringwork category in the inventories published by the Archaeological Survey of Ireland, but here too there are problems of classification and identification. Dungar is still identified as a ringwork,[56] although the photograph in the published volume for Co. Offaly shows that the monument would indeed be better interpreted as a prehistoric ritual site than as a medieval fortification. In Co. Wexford[57], which contributed no less than ten examples to the 1987 map, the Archaeological Survey has identified what it regards as three definite examples. The first is Carrick[58]. The second, Ballyorley Upper, is a substantial earthwork, but no historical evidence is given to indicate why it might have seen Anglo-Norman occupation, not to mention construction. Finally, the linear 'entrenchment' of Baginbun is included as a 'ringwork': here the Anglo-Normans cut off a headland by erecting a *linear* rampart. The placement of Baginbun within the same site category as penannular or fully circular enclosures suggests that the ringwork class has become something of a 'catch-all' class for earthwork miscellanea. There are also five 'possible' examples listed in Wexford, including Hervey de Montmorency's massive earthwork at Greatisland, which almost certainly contained his *caput*. Given its estimated size of 250m by 200m, it lies in the same morphological relationship to the other putative ringworks as a hill-fort does to a ring-fort. Turning to Co. Wicklow, the monument known as 'Rath Turtle moat' is listed in the appropriate volume as a ringwork[59]. The altitude at which Rath Turtle stands, 900ft above sea-level, would be atypical for an Anglo-Norman

monument. The morphology of the earthwork suggests it might be a massive late prehistoric ring-barrow. The curious site-name suggests an even more interesting identification: Rath Turtle preserves the name of the Mac Torcaill dynasty of 12th century Dublin, and Etchingham has suggested that the monument marks the southwards expansion of the Dublin Norse in the 11th or 12th century, and that it may even be a royal residence of the Dublin dynasty[60]. Finally, it is ironic that the compilers of the West Cork volume have assigned to more conventional classifications two of the three Twohig ringworks with which the debate began in 1978: Dunnamark, which may have a souterrain, is now classed as a 'cliff-edge fort', and Castleventry is now classed as a ring-fort[61].

The certainty that the Anglo-Normans did build some earthwork-castles which, when robbed of their timberwork, look the same as early medieval ring-forts, does not excuse a clear lack of rigour in the collection of examples of ringworks. Given the likelihood that any circular or penannular enclosure in Ireland with an internal bank, an external ditch, and a diameter of between 30m and 50m, will prove on excavation to be an early medieval settlement, the onus lies with proponents of the ringwork idea to provide evidence in support of an Anglo-Norman origin for any earthwork with those morphological characteristics. Spurious as a number of the published ringwork identifications are, the sheer number of sites for which circumstantial evidence in favour of a ringwork identification has been deployed might falsely be regarded as an indication in itself that the idea has validity: the suggestion that there are some seventy sites which may be regarded as 'possible' – the word is used with revealing frequency – expressions of a monument conception adds weight to the argument that the monument conception itself has been authentically retrieved. Graham, a vigorous proponent of the ringwork idea to whom many identifications of ringworks in western Ireland on the 1987 map are attributed, has added further complication by suggesting that the Irish penchant for imitation may have manifested itself in 'Gaelic ringworks'[62]. His conception is clear: substantial ring-fort-like enclosures of the age of Gaelic feudalism may have been inspired by Norman ringwork castles, and may therefore be regarded less as ring-forts than as ringworks. Here the discussion shifts towards absurdity: sites which may be regarded as 'possible' Anglo-Norman ringworks provided inspiration for the expression by more 'possible' ringworks of nascent feudalism among a people building ring-forts in their thousands from the middle of the first millennium AD.

The fundamental problem with the model of the Irish ringwork-castle is its conception. Archaeologists should always heed the message of the Piltdown Man: if we believe in a 'missing link' we are likely to find one, and what we find may be invention, not discovery[63]. What of the proposition that there are places which must have been fortified, even though they do not have, or appear never to have had, motte-castles? As Orpen noted a long time ago, motte-castles are

indeed absent in some parts of the Anglo-Norman colony, but this should surprise us only if we regard the colony as homogenous, politically and culturally, and, most importantly, in its perception of danger. Anglo-Norman Ireland was, in reality, a mosaic of lordships and earldoms, each sufficiently liberated from centralised authority to develop its own settlement dynamic. The complex relationships between colonists and natives allow us to believe that not everywhere needed the immediate protection which an earthwork-castle offered, and indeed some parts of Ireland must have been peaceful enough for the building of stone-castles or stone-halls to have begun *ab initio* without an earlier motte-phase. Connacht is a case in point: the halls and hall-houses which Holland identified in Galway[64] and beyond were not especially well-defended structures, as will be discussed below, nor were those moated sites which Holland has listed for Galway. Some of these stone halls, and possibly some of the moats as well, were built in the early stages of the Anglo-Norman settlement in Connacht, and this indicates that some Anglo-Norman aristocrats did not perceive a need for rapidly-constructed earth and timber castles[65]. There is, then, no 'missing link': some parts of Ireland had a heavy density of mottes (Meath and Ulster), some parts had a lower density (Leinster), and Connacht and Munster (apart from south Tipperary) had very few mottes, and the political autonomy of these areas, combined with the specific relationships between colonists and hosts, explain this regional variability.

## STONE CASTLES, *c.*1170-*c.*1300: INNOVATION AT MEDIEVAL EUROPE'S FRONTIER

Despite its value as a conveyor of information, Leask's book offered a version of the evolution of castles in the Anglo-Norman period which suffered from the same conceptual flaw which afflicted his trilogy on Irish ecclesiastical buildings[66]. The architecture was, in his account of it, generally divorced from the circumstances of its creation. In an exercise which might have validity in prehistory where contextual data is hard-won but which is unnecessary in historical archaeology, Leask arranged buildings relative to each other in configurations in which the shape and position of the great tower, or indeed the lack of a great tower, were regarded as the principal variables for classification and analysis. In unusual departures from this method he grouped some castles under the headings 'City and other Keepless Castles' and 'Castles on Rocks'. McNeill's recent account of Anglo-Norman castle-building follows a different methodology: he regards 'fashion' and 'tradition' as driving forces of the evolution of architectural conceptions. Thus he discusses royal and baronial castles of the mid- to late-13th century in terms of their adherence to, or divergence from, English style[67], and by this provides the contextualisation missing in Leask's categories.

There are differences in the lists of castles on which the Leask and McNeill syntheses are built. Some of the castles which were discussed by Leask are rather

less prominent in McNeill's synthesis[68]. Equally, when Leask's *Irish Castles* first appeared in 1941 a number of interesting Anglo-Norman castles had apparently not yet been identified – Grenan (Co. Kilkenny) and Ballyderown (Co. Cork), for example[69] – while others – Dungarvan (Co. Waterford), for example – had not been subjected to close scrutiny. Two of the principal advances in our knowledge of stone castles of late 12th-early 14th century date over the past three decades relate to Gaelic Irish castles, particularly in Ulster[70], and to the halls and hall-houses, particularly in the west of Ireland[71].

Gaelic Irish castles in western Ireland in the 12th century have already been discussed, but little is known of Gaelic castle-building from the late 12th century to the tower-house period. McNeill has suggested that Castlekirke (Co. Galway) should be regarded as a Gaelic building of this period. The *Annals of Connacht* attribute the building of four castles to Richard de Burgh and his Irish allies, the sons of Ruaidhri Ua Conchobair, and since two of the four are recorded in the same source as having been built by de Burgh and Adam de Staunton, McNeill surmises that the other two, one of them being Castle Kirke, may have been built by Ruaidhri's sons[72]. McNeill's suggestion that Castle Kirke is an Irish version of a 'hall-house castle' of English type raises questions of the authorship of design of castles built under joint, culturally-separate, patronage. In the case of Castle Kirke one might be tempted, however, to retain the interpretation of it as an English castle[73]: its corner pilasters are rare in Ireland, but Greencastle (Co. Down) and Clonmacnois (Co. Offaly), both English buildings with first floor halls, are obvious parallels, and the positioning of Castle Kirke's spiral stair in one of its pilasters links it closely with Clonmacnois.

The Anglo-Norman settlement of Connacht was not achieved until after 1235, and with it came a phase of construction of new castles. Most baronial castles in Connacht appear to have had as their focal buildings halls elevated on basements; by the time many of these were built in the mid-13th century, the idea of an enclosure with a focal tower had passed its prime. McNeill has attempted to make a distinction between those halls within castle enceintes and smaller halls or 'hall-houses', but the idea needs further development. First of all, there needs to be a distinction between hall-buildings in castles which have great towers, and castles in which there was a hall-building as primary focus. Secondly, the distinction between hall and hall-house may not have a chronological significance: the castles at Shrule (Co. Mayo) and Castle Carra (Co. Galway), for example, can probably be identified as the castles built in 1238 by two of the *baruin na hErenn*, Matthew fitz Griffin and Adam de Staunton respectively[74], but the latter is identified by McNeill as a castle with a hall, and the former as a hall-house[75].

The small halls of, say, the type of Witches Castle (Co. Galway), may, in functional terms, point us towards the tower-houses of the 14th century and later. These small halls were residential buildings akin to the massive halls at

Plate 1: DUNMORE CASTLE, CO. GALWAY
The 13th century tower stands on the site of a pre-Norman *dún.*

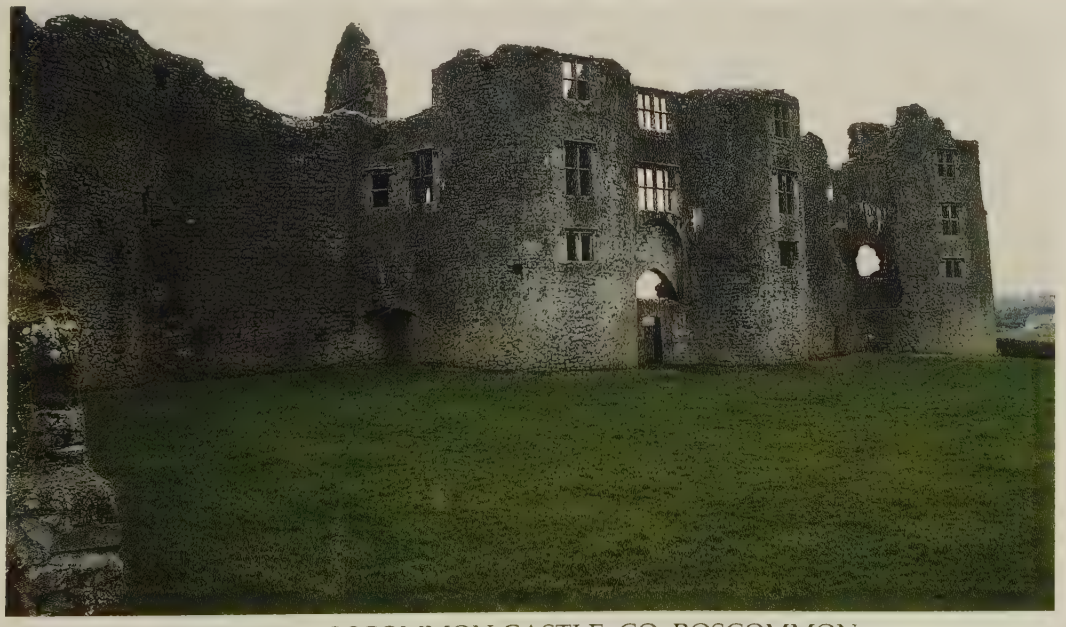


Plate 2: ROSCOMMON CASTLE, CO. ROSCOMMON
The façade of the royal castle of 1270-80.

*(Photographs by the author)*

places like Maynooth (Co. Kildare) and Grenan (Co. Kilkenny) but with no pretence of military function, and they were owned by free tenants who might be described as middle-ranking. The architectural link between halls and tower-houses is not compelling; projecting garderobe turrets are found in a number of 13th century halls and so-called hall-houses[76], as well as in some tower-houses (especially in the English Pale[77]), but otherwise there is no obvious similarity. Late medieval halls of the type represented at Coolhull (Co. Wexford) are comparatively rare, and they represent the after-life of the 13th century hall or hall-house. Tower-house architecture is related conceptually to those great towers of the Anglo-Norman period, and while we may attribute the multi-storeyed character of the tower-houses to a desire to emulate the Anglo-Norman towers of great height, the beginning of the tower-house tradition is difficult to trace[78].

It is appropriate to end a review of 12th and 13th century castles in Ireland with that remarkable phase of castle-construction in the west of Ireland in the period between *c.*1280 and *c.*1310. The four principal castles erected in the region in those three decades may be divided into two groups according to political and morphological variables: Roscommon Castle stands alone as a royal fortress, while Ballymote (Co. Sligo), Ballintubber (Co. Roscommon), and Greencastle [Northburgh] (Co. Donegal) were all baronial. In terms of design, Roscommon and Ballymote are linked by their concentric plans, while Ballintubber and Greencastle have slightly more irregularly-shaped enclosures with polygonal towers. Polygonal towers were used with particularly striking effect at two northern Welsh castles, Caernarvon and Denbigh, and their use at Ballintubber and Greencastle might be understood as emulative.

Of the four castles, it is Roscommon Castle which stands out as a building of genuine international significance. It is an Edwardian castle – a royal castle – built to the design deployed in north Wales in the late 1200s[79]. Royal castle architecture is a topic of enormous interest for Irish specialists. The earliest royal fortress of any significance was Dublin Castle, begun in 1204 to provide a suitable environment for, among other things, protecting the crown's treasure. Equally early is the royal castle at Limerick[80]. Revolutionary new ideas in castle-design, inspired in part perhaps by crusader contact with western Asian systems of fortification, emerged in western Europe at the close of the 12th century, and whereas a place like England was already fully-castellated, and could therefore see new ideas executed only by adding to existing fortresses in which the basic shape was already determined, the creation of the new colony in late 12th century Ireland gave castle-builders the opportunity to deploy these new ideas in castles built *ab initio*. We see those ideas at Dublin and Limerick. In neither case was there a great tower, but instead roughly rectangular enclosures were laid out, and cylindrical towers were placed at the corners. One can detect influence from early 13th century France in these designs[81].

Ironically, the west of Ireland, which clearly possessed 'castles' in pre-Norman times, saw Anglo-Norman settlement at such a comparatively late date that the architectural ideas which accompanied the Anglo-Normans as they settled in in eastern Ireland were no longer new by the time the settlers crossed the Shannon. Roscommon Castle, however, represents a second phase of innovative royal castle design. The first castle on the site was built in 1269 under the justiciar, Robert d'Ufford, apparently at a cost in excess of £3,148-4-3; there was further expenditure about 1270-72 when the castle was under Irish attack, and later in the 1270s and 1280s further and substantial amounts of money were spent on the castle[82]. McNeill has attributed the design of the castle we see today to *c.*1275; Leask attributed it to *c.* 1280[83]. Given the expenditure in 1269 we might even consider the possibility that the plan we see today was laid out at that time. This chronology is important: if Roscommon was laid out about 1275 it is roughly contemporary with Aberystwyth, Flint and Rhuddlan, castles of the first Edwardian campaign of castellation in north Wales, and it pre-dates Conway, Harlech and Beaumaris, castles of the second Edwardian campaign with which it has close stylistic affinities. We might consider the possibility that Roscommon was the place at which Edwardian masons first executed the type of concentric plan which reached its apogee at Beaumaris. Even allowing for the small rectangular gate-building positioned off-centre along its west side, there is also a case for describing Roscommon Castle as the first castle to be built *ab initio* in these islands to a properly concentric plan[84].

## NOTES

1 Orpen, G.H., 'Mote and bretasche buillding in Ireland', *English Historical Review* 21 (1906), pp. 417-44; 'Motes and Norman castles in Ireland', *English Historical Review* 22 (1907), pp 228-54, 440-67; 'Motes and Norman Castles in Ireland', *JRSAI* 37 (1907), pp. 123-52; Westropp, T.J., 'On Irish motes and early Norman castles', *JRSAI* 34 (1904), pp 313-45; 'Irish motes and alleged Norman castles: note on some recent contributions to their study', *JRSAI* 35 (1905), pp 402-6.

2 This term is borrowed from the French literature: for example, the proceedings of *Château Gaillard*, the permanent European conference on castles, are sub-titled *Etudes de Castellologie médiévale*. The literal English translation, *castellology*, lacks the currency in the English-speaking world which 'castellologie' enjoys in France.

3 From an historiographical perspective Orpen was quite the equal Ella Armitage, whose *Early Norman Castles of the British Isles* (London 1912) is the best-known publication of early 'castellologie'. See Counihan, J., 'Ella Armitage: castle studies pioneer', *Fortress* 6 (1990), pp 51-9. The publication of Barry, T.B., *The Archaeology of Medieval Ireland*, London 1987, a book which treats the 'medieval period' as starting in 1169, may be taken to mark the discipline's comparatively recent *floruit*.

4 *Motta* was first used as the descriptive noun for a castle-like structure in the 11th century. For brief commentaries on the word, its origin, and meaning, see Débord, A. (ed), 'Les fortifications de terre en Europe Occidental du Xe au XIIe siècles', *Archéologie Médiévale* 11 (1980), pp 18-19, 30-33.

5 *JRSAI* 37 (1907), pp 137-9; the following quote is on p.152.

6 McNeill, T.E., 'Mottes in Ireland: a draft list', *Bull. Group Study of Irish Historic Settlement* 3 (1972), pp 27-51; Glasscock, R., 'Mottes in Ireland', *Chateau Gaillard* 7 (1975), pp 261-75.

7 Leask, H.G., *Irish Castles and Castellated Houses*, 1st ed. Dundalk 1941; Leask's views on Anglo-

Norman castles were published at greater length in 'Irish castles: 1180-1310', *Archaeological Journal* 93 (1936), pp 144-99.

8 Shorter syntheses (Johnson, D.N., *Irish Castles*, Dublin 1988; Sweetman, P.D., *Irish Castles and Fortified Houses*, Dublin 1995; Barry, *Medieval Ireland*, pp 55-71, 181-90) have followed Leask's outline. Perhaps the only part of Leask's version of the history of castle-building in Ireland which is regarded as quite incorrect is his notion of a hiatus in the 14th century. Leask's concept of hiatus is discussed in O'Keeffe, T., 'Rathnageeragh and Ballyloo: stone castles of the 14th and early 15th centuries in county Carlow', *JRSAI* 107 (1987), pp. 28-49; the chronology of tower-houses is discussed by Barry, T.B., 'The archaeology of the tower-house in late medieval Ireland', in H. Anderson and J. Wienberg (eds), *The Study of Medieval Archaeology*, Stockholm 1993, pp 211-17.

9 McNeill, T.E., *Anglo-Norman Ulster*, Edinburgh 1980; *Carrickfergus Castle*, Belfast 1981.

10 Faulkner, P.A., 'Domestic planning from the 12th to the 14th centuries,' *Archaeological Journal* 115 (1958), pp 150-53, and 'Castle planning in the fourteenth century', *Archaeological Journal* 120 (1963), pp 215-35.

11 McNeill, T., *Castles in Ireland. Feudal Power in a Gaelic World*, London 1997.

12 Reported in Lehane, B.,*The Companion Guide to Ireland*, London 1973), p. 123.

13 The question of whether there was an 'Ireland' to invade and colonise has recently been raised: Carty, A., *Was Ireland Conquered? International law and the Irish Question*. London, pp 16-30.

14 For a discussion see Raftery, B., *Pagan Celtic Ireland*, Dublin 1993.

15 Barry, *Medieval Ireland*, p. 1.

16 Graham, B.J., *Medieval Irish Settlement*. Historical Geography Research Series 3, Norwich 1980, pp 41-2. For an overview of the relationship between nationalism and archaeology in Ireland see Cooney, G., 'Building the future on the past: archaeology and the construction of national identity in Ireland', in M. Diaz Andreu and T. Champion (eds), *Nationalism and Archaeology in Europe*, London 1996, pp 143-63.

17 Helen Clarke, like T.B. Barry, described medieval archaeology in England as being in its infancy: *The Archaeology of Medieval England*, London 1984, p. 9.

18 This matter is also discussed by O'Keeffe, T., 'Rural settlement and cultural identity in Gaelic Ireland, 1000-1500', *Ruralia I*, Památky Archeologické-Supplementum 5 (Prague 1996), pp 143-5; see also Stout, M., *The Irish Ringfort*, Blackrock 1997, pp 24-8.

19 Lynn, C.J., 'The medieval ring-fort an archaeological chimera?', *Irish Archaeological Research Forum* 11, 1 (1975), p. 30. Lynn estimated that between 5% and 15% of ringforts belong in that category.

20 O'Grady, S.H. (ed), *Caithréim Thoirdelbhaigh*, Vol II, Dublin 1929, p. 2.

21 Simms, K., *From Kings to Warlords*, Woodbridge 1987, pp 15-17.

22 O'Keeffe, 'Gaelic Ireland, 1000-1500', pp 145-6.

23 England is discussed by Coulson, C., 'Cultural realities and reappraisals in English castle-study, *Journal of Medieval History* 22, 2 (1996), pp 171-4.

24 Discussed in M. Chibnall, 'Orderic Vitalis on castles', in C. Harper-Bill, C. Holdsworth and J. Nelson (eds), *Studies in Medieval History Presented to R. Allen Brown* (Woodbridge 1989), p. 47.

25 Dimock, J., *Giraldi Cambrensis opera*, vol 5, London 1867, p.182.

26 Literature in which this matter is discussed includes the following: Ó Corráin, D., 'Nationality and kingship in pre-Norman Ireland', in T.W. Moody (ed), *Nationality and the Pursuit of National Independence*, Historical Studies 11, Belfast 1978, pp 1-35; 'Aspects of early Irish history', in B.G. Scott (ed), *Perspectives in Irish History*, Belfast 1974, 64-75; Graham, B.J., 'Medieval timber and earthwork fortifications in western Ireland', *Medieval Archaeology* 32 (1988), pp 110-29; 'Twelfth and thirteenth century earthwork castles in Ireland, Fortress 9 (1991), pp 24-34; Flanagan, M.-T., 'Warfare in twelfth-century Ireland', in T. Bartlett and K. Jeffries (eds), *A Military History of Ireland*, Cambridge 1996, pp 52-75.

27 Annals of Tigernach s.a. 1124

28 Williams, 'bell-house and a burh-geat', p. 222.

29 For Anglo-Saxon England see Williams, A., 'A bell-house and a burh-geat: lordly residences in England before the Norman conquest', *Medieval Knighthood* 4 (1992), pp 221-40.

30 *Annals of Tigernach* s.a. 1124

31 *Annals of Tigernach* s.a. 1126; sa 1166

32 *Annals of Innisfallen* s.a. 995, 1012

33 *Annals of the Four Masters* s.a. 1153
34 *Annals of Tigernach* s.a. 1124; *Annals of Clonmacnois* s.a. 1131.
35 *Annals of the Four Masters* s. a 1133, 1146. Terms in use in the 11th and 12th centuries, and the contexts in which they were used, are reviewed by Flanagan, 'Warfare in twelfth-century Ireland', pp 60-63. High medieval Gaelic poetry also provides a lexicon of names for defensible residences or fortifications, among them *dún, múr, ráth* and *longphort* (Jeep Leersen, *Mere Irish and Fíor-Ghael. Studies in the Idea of Irish Nationality, its Development and Literary Expression prior to the Nineteenth Century*, Cork 1996, pp 151-90).
36 In a 12th or 13th century trilingual charter pertaining to Zealand, for example, *motte* is used in the French version, *munitio* in the Latin version, and *werf* in the Netherlandish version: Débord (ed), 'Les fortifications de terre', pp 18, 31.
37 For a critical review of the concept of feudalism and its value see Brown, E.A.R., 'The tyranny of a construct: feudalism and historians of medieval Europe', *American Historical Review* 79 (1974), pp 1063-88.
38 For a brief account see Ó Cróinín, D., *Early Medieval Ireland*, London 1995, pp 291-2.
39 K.W. Nicholls ('Anglo-French Ireland and after', *Peritia* 1 (1982), p. 389) first drew attention to Molyneux's description of the castle at Ballinasloe.
40 Graham 1988, p.115
41 Lynn, C.J., 'The excavation of Rathmullen, a raised rath and motte in County Down', *UJA* 44-5 (1981-2), pp. 65-71 [Big Glebe (Co. Derry) is discussed on pp 149-50]; 'Excavations on a mound at Gransha, County Down, 1972 and 1982: an interim report', *UJA* 48 (1985), pp 81-90.
42 Knox, H.T., 'Some Connacht raths and motes', *JRSAI* 41 (1911), pp 205-40; 301-42. In heavily Normanised parts of Ireland we might expect to find sites like Dún Leodha concealed beneath Anglo-Norman monuments: these earlier sites would have provided natural foundations on which the Anglo-Normans could themselves erect fortresses, and their role within indigenous polity would have made them obvious structures for suppression. One candidate is Delvin (Co. Westmeath) where a motte may conceal a high-status site of pre-Norman age (Flanagan, M.-T., 'Anglo-Norman change and continuity: the castle of Telach Cail at Delvin', *Irish Historical Studies* 28 (1993), pp 385-9). McNeill, who takes a rather cautious approach to the issue of pre-Norman fortifications, sees Duneight and Downpatrick (both Co. Down) as sites for which combined physical and documentary evidence suggests a new settlement/fortress phenomenon in the immediate pre-colonial period (*Castles in Ireland*, pp 11-14). The jury is still out, however, on the monument at Downpatrick (*Ráthceltchair* or *Dúndáleathglais*): this was one of the sites over which Westropp and Orpen argued in the early 1900s (See note 1 [Barry (*Medieval Ireland*, Fig. 14) identifies it as a ringwork]). Herity has now offered a more convincing interpretation (Herity, M., 'Motes and mounds at Royal Sites in Ireland', *JRSAI* 123 (1993), p. 66.
43 King, D.J.C. and Alcock, L., 'Ringworks of England and Wales', Château Gaillard 3 (1969), pp 90-127.
44 Renn, D., *Norman Castles in Britain*, London 1968; for other references see Barry, *Medieval Ireland*, pp 45-50.
45 K. O'Conor, 'Irish earthwork castles', *Fortress* 12 (1992), pp 3-12.
46 For a discussion see Nicholls, 'Anglo-French Ireland', pp 390-1.
47 McNeill, *Anglo-Norman Ulster*, p. 103.
48 McNeill, T.E., 'Hibernica Pacata et Castellata', *Château Gaillard* 14 (1988), pp 262-3.
49 O'Keeffe, T., 'The archaeology of Anglo-Norman castles in Ireland. Part 1: Mottes and ringworks', *Archaeology Ireland* 4, 3 (Autumn 1990), pp 15-17.
50 *Castles in Ireland*, pp 60-63.
51 Carrick (Co. Wexford), Mourne Abbey (Co. Cork), and Mount Sandel, seem to this writer to be genuine examples of Anglo-Norman ring-fortifications.
52 For the original references to the monuments discussed here see Barry, T.B., 'Anglo-Norman ringworks: some evidence', in T. Reeves-Smyth and F.Hamond (eds), *Landscape Archaeology in Ireland*, Oxford 1983, pp 295-314, and Barry, *Medieval Ireland*, pp 45-50.
53 In the 16th century earthen ramparts of ring-fort-like character were known to have been erected around properties: *Calendar of Ormond Deeds, 1172-1603*, ed. E. Curtis, 6 vols, Dublin 1932-43: 1547-84, no. 11; 1584-1603, nos 31, 32.
54 Graham's attempt to identify Dundonnell as a castle mentioned in 1236 falters on locational grounds ('Western Ireland', pp 122-3).

55 Barry. 'Anglo-Norman ringworks', pl. 4.
56 *Archaeological Inventory of County Offaly*, compiled by C. O'Brien and P.D. Sweetman, Dublin 1997, p. 132; fig. 35.
57 *Archaeological Inventory of County Wexford*, compiled by M. J. Moore, Dublin 1996.
58 see note 51
59 *Archaeological Inventory of County Wicklow*, compiled by E. Grogan and A. Kilfeather, Dublin 1997, p. 66.
60 C. Etchingham, 'Evidence of Scandinavian settlement in Wicklow', in K. Hannigan and W. Nolan (eds) *Wicklow: History and Society* (Dublin 1994), p.123.
61 *Archaeological Inventory of West Cork*, compiled by D. Power, Dublin 1993, pp 152, 257.
62 Graham, 'Western Ireland'.
63 Acceptance of this notorious forgery *(Eonanthropus dawsoni)* was made-up from a simian jaw and human cranium was facilitated by the belief that there was a missing evolutionary link between ape and man; in 1953 scientific analysis revealed the two skull parts to be from different species. See Renfrew, C. and Bahn, P., *Archaeology. Theories, Methods, Practice*, London 1993, p. 104.
64 Holland, P., 'The Anglo-Normans in Co. Galway: the process of colonisation', *JGAHS* 41 (1987-8), pp 73-89; 'The Anglo-Normans and their castles in county Galway', in G. Moran and R. Gillespie (eds), *Galway: History and Society*, Dublin 1996, pp 1-26
65 For a related argument regarding Munster see T. O'Keeffe, 'An early Anglo-Norman castle at Ballyderown, Co. Cork', *JRSAI* 114 (1984), pp 48-56.
66 *Irish Churches and Monastic Buildings*, 3 vols, Dundalk 1955-65.
67 One surprising omission from McNeill's bibliography is Stalley, R.A., 'William of Prene and the Royal Works in Ireland', *JBAA* 131 (1978), pp 30-49.
68 Kilkenny Castle, for example, one of Leask's urban castles, may prove in future research to be a more significant building than McNeill's treatment of it might suggest: there has been extensive post-medieval rebuilding but its plan (a quadrangle with massive corner towers) may reflect an original design of William Marshal the Elder, and that design may in turn reflect contemporary French fashion, with Saumur (Maine et Loire) a good parallel (O'Keeffe, T., 'The archaeology of Anglo-Norman castles in Ireland. Part 2: Stone castles', *Archaeology Ireland* 4, 4 (Winter 1990), p. 22). Another castle which has been demoted to an appendix entry in McNeill's book is Shanid (Co. Limerick), and the company it kept in the category in which Leask placed it, the 'polygonal keep', has been dispersed, with no mention made at all of Castleknock (Co. Dublin). Leask's description of the remains at Castleknock as comprising shattered walls on a tree-clad mound (*Irish Castles*, p. 43) does little justice to the extent of early masonry and to the enormous earthwork on which it stands. The site was briefly described and analysed in 1990 (O'Keeffe, T., 'Medieval frontiers and fortifications: the Pale and its evolution', in F.H.A. Aalen and K. Whelan (eds), *Dublin City and County: from Prehistory to Present*, Dublin 1992, pp 62-4; this paper, which includes a discussion of each of the principal 13th century fortresses in the Dublin region, is not included in McNeill's bibliography), and Herity, in his recent study of Celtic Royal Sites, has offered a new interpretation of the earthwork on which stand the polygonal great tower and curtain wall (Herity, 'Motes and mounds', pp 143-4.).
69 Waterman, D.M., 'Rectangular keeps of the thirteenth century at Grenan (Kilkenny) and Glanworth (Cork)', *JRSAI* 98 (1968), pp 67-73; O'Keeffe, 'Ballyderown'. The writer would take issue with McNeill's views (*Castles in Ireland*, p. 238) on the latter. The co-incidence of variables which led to a date of *c.*1200 being suggested in the first instance for Ballyderown still hold: a rectangular ground-plan, a base batter, a lack of primary main-space vaulting, two original round-arched windows *in situ*, one of them with sandstone roll-mouldings as in the hall of *c.*1200 at Adare (Co. Limerick), a mural stair with plank-turned vault, and chamfered quoins identical to those at Grenan. The writer would, however, submit now to the thrust of McNeill's argument that many structures hitherto considered keeps should now be regarded as halls, and would reclassify Ballyderown accordingly.
70 McNeill, *Anglo-Norman Ulster*.
71 Here credit goes to Holland, 'The Anglo-Normans and their castles'. Buildings of this type were not exclusive to the west of Ireland: two well-known examples of the class on the east coast, neither of them noted by McNeill, *Castles in Ireland*, are Rathumney (Co. Wexford) and Kindlestown (Co. Wicklow); it should be noted that Dunmoe (Co. Meath) and Delvin (Co.

Westmeath), both late medieval, are somewhat incongruous inclusions in McNeill's table of halls and hall-houses (*Castles in Ireland*, p. 151).

72 Perros, H., 'Anglo-Norman Settlement in Connacht in the thirteenth century', *Group for the Study of Irish Historic Settlement Newsletter* 7 (1996-7), p. 2; McNeill, *Castles in Ireland*, pp 161-3.

73 Perros, 'Anglo-Norman Settlement in Connacht', p. 2; Lynn, C.J., 'Some 13th-century castle sites in the west of Ireland: note on a preliminary reconnaissance', *JGAHS* 40 (1985-86), pp 102-3.

74 Perros, 'Anglo-Norman Settlement in Connacht', p. 1.

75 McNeill, *Castles in Ireland*, pp 136, 151.

76 Also in the hall found inside the moat at Rigsdale (see Sweetman, P.D., 'Excavations of a medieval moated site at Rigsdale, County Cork, 1977-78', *PRIA* 81C, pp 193-205) and in that most extraordinary of Irish castles, Ballymoon (Co. Carlow).

77 O'Keeffe, 'Frontiers and fortifications', p. 69.

78 For a recent discussion see O'Keeffe, T., *Barryscourt Castle and the Irish Tower-house*, Kinsale 1997.

79 For a discussion of these castles see Taylor, A., *Studies in Castles and Castle-building*, London 1985, *passim*.

80 McNeill, *Castles in Ireland*, p. 45; the castle is not, however, 'still the centre of government' (p. 240).

81 The present, heavily-altered, Dublin Castle is very likely to preserve the plan and parts of the masonry of this early fortress, and it is conceivably the earliest building in Ireland or Britain to conform to what Leask termed the 'keepless' design (O'Keeffe, 'Stone castles', p. 22). Knight has compared the plan of Dublin Castle with that of Le Coudray-Salbart (Deux-Sèvres) and Usk (Monmouthshire) (Knight, J., 'The road to Harlech: aspects of some early thirteenth-century Welsh castles', in J.R.Kenyon and R. Avent (eds), *Castles in Wales and the Marches. Essays in Honour of D.J.Cathcart King*, Cardiff 1987, pp 78-9; Fig. 18), while McNeill has identified the twin-towered gateway at Dublin as indicating influence from France (McNeill, *Castles in Ireland*, pp 53-4); McNeill cites no specific examples, but a number of sites in the Ile de France have gates of comparable type: Ambleny (Aisne), dating from *c.*1200 or a little earlier, Yèvre-le-Chatel, dating from *c.*1200, and Mez le Maréchal, dating from *c.*1210 (Châtelain, A., *Châteaux Forts et Féodalité en Ile de France du XIeme au XIIIeme Siècle*, Créer 1983, pp 269-74, 311-17; 369-73). He notes also that the gateway at Limerick, another early 13th century royal castle, may be compared with that at Nesles-en-Tardenois (Aisne) and, to a lesser degree, Dourdan (Essonne). Both these castles, however, are later than Limerick (Châtelain, *Ile de France*, pp 319; 355) and in any case they differ from Limerick in one important respect: both possess cylindrical donjons at the corners of their enceintes, detached from the main curtain and facilitated by a concave curve on the curtains. It has been suggested elsewhere that Limerick's overall design may be best paralleled at the baronial castle of Goulancourt (Oise), built before 1210 (O'Keeffe, 'Stone castles'; see Châtelain, *Ile de France*, pp 361-3); here there is also staggering of the walls, the gate is positioned off-centre, and in the sharing of two loops within single embrasures. A French connection may also explain a design of castle found in eastern and central Ireland at Carlow, Ferns (Co. Wexford), Lea (Co. Laois) and Terryglass (Co. Tipperary). The dating of these buildings has been a matter of dispute, but they are certainly 13th century. McNeill continues to regard these buildings as without parallel elsewhere (*Castles in Ireland*, p.144), but parallels can be found in France, at Nemours (Seine et Marne), dating from between 1150 and 1180 (Châtelain, *Ile de France*, p. 265), and Romefort (Indre), dating from 1175 (Châtelain, A., *Donjons Romans des Pays d'Ouest*, Paris 1973, pp 143-4). Plans of these are published in O'Keeffe, 'Stone castles' p. 22.

82 Perros, 'Anglo-Norman settlement in Connacht', p. 4.

83 Taylor, *Studies in Castles and Castle-building, passim*.

84 This distinction is enjoyed by the baronial castle of Caerphilly in south Wales: see Pounds, N. J. G., *The Medieval Castle in England and Wales. A Social and Political History*, Cambridge 1990, p. 165.

# LEACHTA CUIMHNE OR FUNERARY CAIRNS OF WORMHOLE, MOYCULLEN, CO. GALWAY

PEADAR O'DOWD

The care given to the dead in the form of careful deliberate human burial, which first appeared, it seems, in the Middle-Palaeolithic (*c.*80,000-35,000 B.C.), is a major step in the evolution of mankind. Subsequently, the use of stone to embellish the burial site, such as in tomb building or simply marking the grave, has become synonymous with death itself. This paper attempts to relate a further use of stone, in the erection of cairns called *Leachta Cuimhne*, in the funerary process. We will look at those especially associated with 'Funeral Halts' as mentioned by Máire Nic Néill in her article, 'Wayside Death Cairns in Ireland', in *Béaloideas*, 16 (1946), pp. 49-63, and refer specifically to a dwindling number of these cairns in the townland of Wormhole, near Moycullen village, Co. Galway.

The word *lie* for a flat stone and *leacht* meaning a collection of stones laid out in a special way, dates, it seems in the Irish context, to the Early Christian Period. A *leacht* usually denoted a square or rectangular stone altar or a base for cross-pillars such as one finds in many of the hermitage islands off the western seaboard of Ireland[1]. Jim Higgins[2] also refers to this:

> *Leachts* or Altars and Penitential Stations are frequently found in association with early sites, or in their immediate vicinity, some of these sometimes have crosses in association with them... Penitential stations can sometimes also be 'Altars', or simple heaps of stones... Where altars or *leachts* occur in isolation or away from Christian sites, they often tend to be late.

In later times again, the erection of cairns of stones called *Leachta Cuimhne* became associated with the dead, often with the actual funerary procedure itself. Those which we may class as wayside death cairns, however, can have other functions, such as those in Inishmore in the Aran Islands. Here, the cairns, mostly mortared and rendered into more formal roadside cenotaphs, are memorials to people who repose in nearby graveyards, and were erected by their relatives along the winding roadsides of Aran to solicit prayers for the departed. Fr Charles Scantlebury, S.J.,[3] explains:

> As we leave Cill Eanna, our attention is attracted by certain monuments on the roadside. These consist of square piers of masonry surmounted by crosses, and as we examine them, we find that they contain inscriptions, asking prayers for the

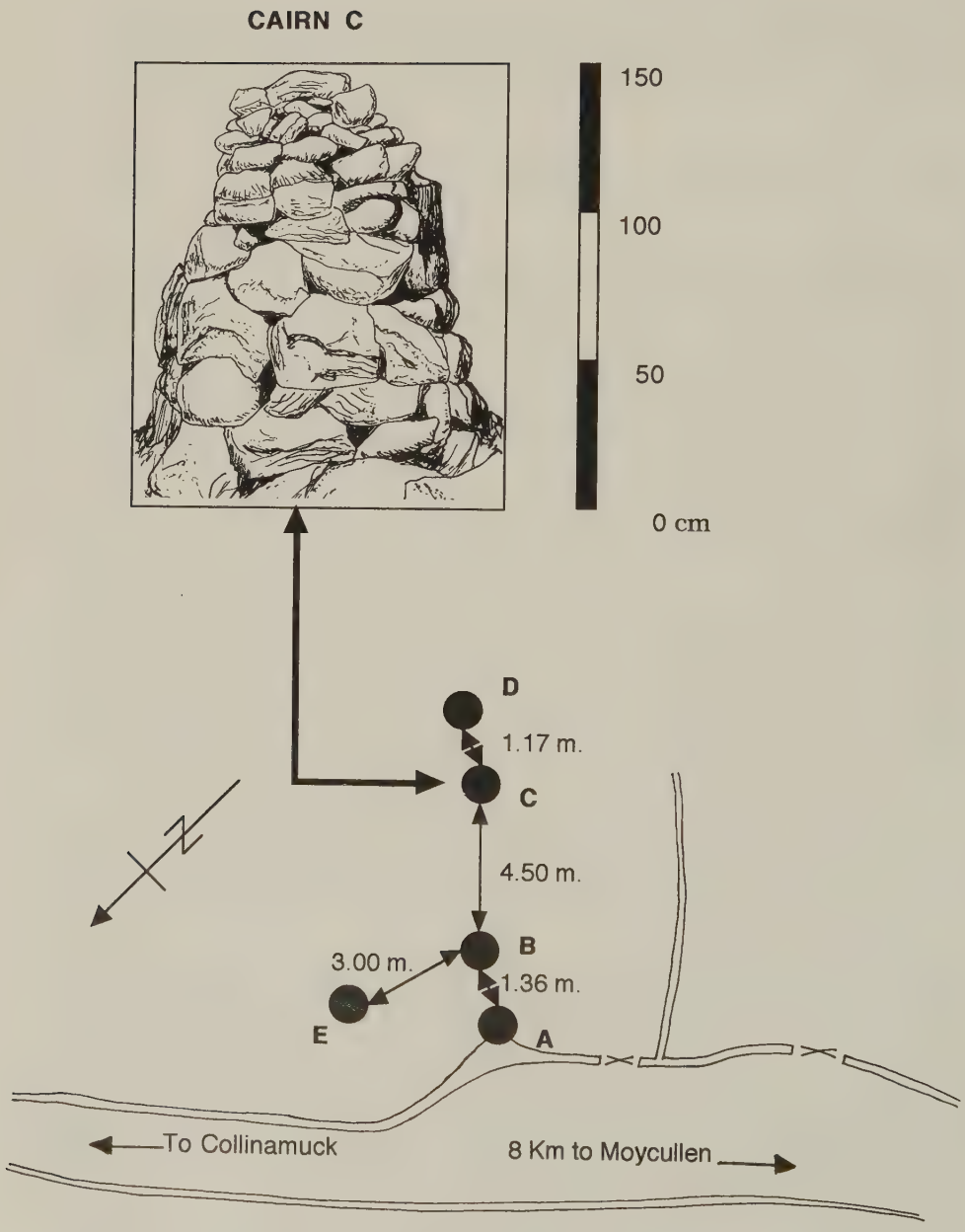



Fig. 1: Map of Wormhole area indicating location of funerary cairns. (Drawing by the author).

> repose of the souls of departed ones. These monuments (called, *Leachta Cuimhne* stones of remembrance) are to be found in other parts of the island and are comparatively recent origin. They are cenotaphs erected by friends of people, interred in the out-of-the-way graveyards, in order that passers-by seeing them, may remember the dead.

The more conventenal drystone constructed wayside cairn, according to Máire Nic Néill, marks the actual burial sites of such unfortunates as drowned sailors, murder victims, fugitive soldiers killed 'on the run', famine or plague victims, where the placing of stones was usually accompanied by a prayer for the deceased. In three rare 'ghostly' cases, (one in Ballymoe in North-east Galway), however, she states (p.54) that 'the stone is added to hold the dead down more securely'!

Perhaps, the most sinister reason for causing a cairn to be erected over a burial site was to avoid the malign influence which might translate to a person passing a grave of a presumed evil person. An example of this can be seen in an old graveyard in the district of Ballymoyer in South Armagh. This ancient site contains the grave of Florence MacMoyer, one of the four priests who gave evidence against Oliver Plunkett, Archbishop of Armagh, leading to the latter's execution. Redmond O'Hanlon[4] explains:

> The reputed site of the grave was regarded as a place of evil. To avoid the ill-luck which might befall anyone passing the spot, it was customary to cast a stone in that direction. In the course of the years an immense accumulation of stones arose above and around the grave. Today, this cairn of infamy, now marked by a thicket of briars, is the sole memorial to Florence MacMoyer, the last Keeper of the Book of Armagh.

According to Máire Nic Néill, (p. 54), however, most wayside cairns were built to mark the actual death-place, because 'it is a matter of common knowledge that the victims' remains rest in the local churchyards'. Nevertheless, the place of death retained eerie associations and, by adding a stone on passing the cairn, one appeased the ghost of the dead person and avoided various misfortunes such as, in Connacht (p.57), the mysterious *Féar Gortach* ('Hungry Grass') - leading to a terrible hunger) or even meeting the same fate as the deceased.

The erection of cairns to commemorate an untimely death, especially on the spot where it occured, is thus an ancient custom and can be recorded here. Dr. Thomas Molyneux[5], in his *Journey to Connaught* in April 1709, commented:

> ... All along, as we travell'd thro' the county of Gallway, I observ'd a very great number of heaps of stones rais'd into a Pyramid, some with lime, generally without, along the road, in memory, as I am told of burialls that have pass'd that way.

A. Smith, in a footnote to the above observation in 1846, disagreed:

> These 'Pyramids' may still be seen, with many more since erected, not 'in memory of burials,' but to clear the fields of stones. They have been mistaken by Dr Molneux for the ancient Irish leacht, or pile of stones in memory of the dead; generally raised on the spot where some sudden or accidental death occured. This ancient practice is still observed.

Examples can be gleaned from placenames such as Lough George on the Galway-Tuam road. L. B. Mayer-Jones, in his 'Taisce Talk' notes in the *Connacht Tribune*,[6] relates some local folklore which tells the story of how Seoirse de Barra was killed when thrown from a magic water horse captured from nearby Lough Afoor:

> ... The people saw the horse going back into the lake with the bridle and saddle still on her, and maybe they are there yet. Seoirse was taken back to Castlebar and buried there, but whenever people passed the place where the accident took place, they used to take up a stone and throw it on the heap of stones which was there; and they would say, 'The Blessings of God on your soul, Seorise de Barra'. And the heap of stones came to be known as Seoirse de Barra's Cairn or Leacht Seoirse or Lough George.

Farther north and just outside the picturesque village of Cong, on the Clonbur Road, an elaborate cairn in the form of a cenotaph built of rough-hewn stones contains an inscribed stone bearing the words, 'Pray for the soules of John Joyce and Mary Joyce his wife who dyed 6th of August, 1712'. Richard Hayward, writing in 1943[7] gives the background to the inscription:

> This monument commemorates one of those tragic incidents all too common in the darker history of the west, when, arising out of some feud, John Joyce was set on by his enemies and brutally beaten to death, the same fate overtaking his wife when she went to his rescue. All around this cenotaph you will see little piles of stones and rude stone and wooden crosses. These are known as Crusheens - Croisíní - Little Crosses - and they have been placed here in memory of the dead who passed this way to their last resting place.

J. A. Fahy[8] gives us more information on this cenotaph:

> A small stone cross among The Cresheens on the west or Cornamona Road catches the eye. It commemorates Mary Joyce, a young woman who was killed in a family feud in 1712. The incident was a sensation at the time, three young men, brothers, being subsequently hanged at Ballinrobe Gaol for their part in the affair.

Other *leachta cuimhne* erected to commemorate accidental deaths occur in the Galway area such as at Cartymore cross-roads, near Athenry, where Professor Etienne Rynne[9] notes a monument similar to the aforementioned wayside memorials in the Aran Islands. This fourteen foot high monument asks the passerby to pray for Oliver Brown of Coolarne who was killed in the 17th

century when he fell off his horse at that spot. Meanwhile, William Henry, a committee member of this Society, (pers. comm), informs me of the sad fate of a *leacht* which commemorated the death of a female member of the Joyce family, who fell from her horse at Rahoon. This monument has been removed in recent times in the course of field-clearing operations to provide a pitch for a local soccer team!

Yet another reason for erecting a *leacht*, according to Máire Nic Néill, was to rest the deceased on it during the funeral procession instead of on a special stone such as the 'licker-stane' in Scotland[10] so as to alleviate the malign propensity associated with any spot where a coffin might actually touch the ground. This could occur especially at funeral halts, about which Máire Nic Néill writes, (p.59):

> Halts at special places during funeral processions were once common in Ireland and still survive in some districts. Some of our informants say that they (cairns) originated in the days when the corpse was carried to the graveyard on a bier borne by men, and that their purpose was to rest the bearers... At some of them the coffin was laid down on a stone-heap.... . The passer-by added his stone to the resting-place heap just as to a death-heap. In some reports, however, it is said that it was only at funerals that stones were added to these funeral-halt heaps.

According to Nic Néill, no study has yet been made of these funeral halts, and the 'observance seems to have varied from district to district'. In the Wormhole tradition of wayside cairn-building on the western shores of Lough Corrib some 10 miles north of Galway City, while the coffin was 'rested' on a large flat boulder (now removed for road widening purposes), stones were placed by families from the funeral cortage on nearby *leachta* during the funeral halt. This was explained in an 1996 note to me by William Henry on the funerary tradition in that district:

> These funeral cairns date back at least to a time when coffins were taken to the cemetery in Moycullen for burial by a horse-drawn open cart or wagon. The custom in this area was that when the funeral procession reached the crest of the hill, the coffin was removed from the cart and placed on a large flat stone in front of the field of monuments. The people then knelt in prayer, while some of the men of the deceased family raised a few stones on the *leacht*. When they were finished, the coffin was placed upon the cart again, and the funeral procession continued on its journey to the cemetery. It seems that each family had its own *leacht* and they continued to build the same *leacht* until one generation had died out, then the following generation started to build a new one.

The last reported additions to the Wormhole cairns occured on the 15th November, 1986, and on the 10th January, 1988 when the funerals of Nellie and James Maloney, of Parke, took place to Moycullen cemetery. Before that, according to a local man, Martin Walsh, people from the Parke and Burnthouse areas were also buried at the old Killanin Cemetery, with the usual funeral stop

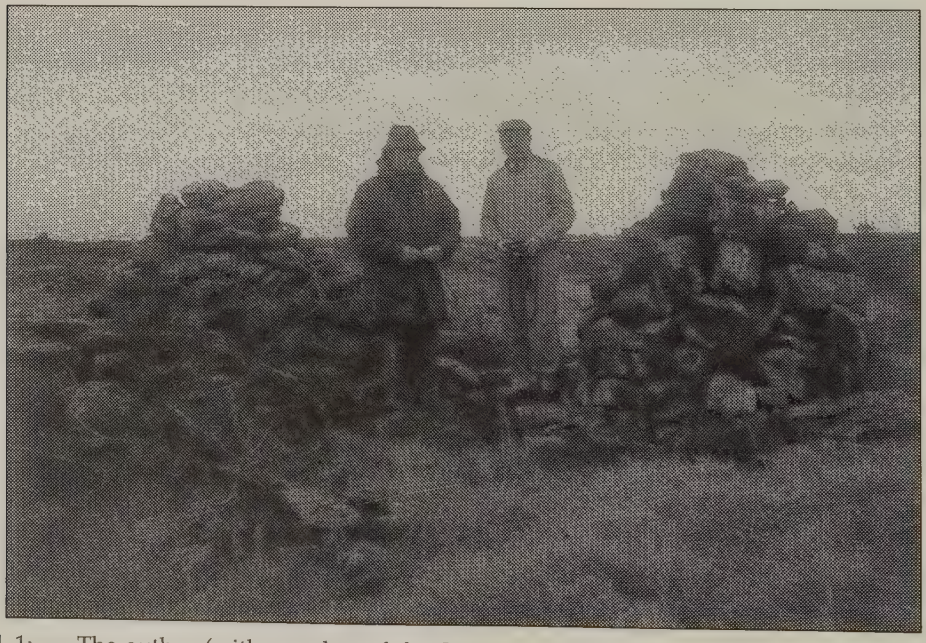
being made at what the local people called *'The Leachtanna'*, at Wormhole.

Obviously, something other than placing the coffin on a stone-heap was intended in the erection of the wayside cairns at Wormhole on the Moycullen to Collinamuck Road. Various writers have commented on this custom. Estyn Evans[11], sees them as warding off evil, which 'pursued the corpse to the burial ground'. In addition to shaking the chairs on which the coffin rested, or bringing salt in one's pocket as the funeral progressed, he tells us that in Connacht stones were added to small cairns which stood at stopping places on the way'.

The custom of placing stones on top of one another beside the road or pathway during the funeral procession to form the nucleus of a cairn thus has connotations of warding off evil influences from 'the other people' or from the devil himself. C. M. Arensberg [12] tells us that, 'there is never a funeral but the other people are at it, too, walking along behind'. Estyn Evans mentions ways of avoiding such unwanted 'guests':

> With the idea no doubt of deceiving the spirit of the dead the coffin was carried to the graveyard by the longest route, perferably a disused track, and the procession made a sunwise circle around some place or object on the way, a cross, a church-site, a lone thorn tree or a crossroads.

The building of the wayside cairn may well have been part of that process of fooling 'the devil'.



Pl. 1: The author (with member of the Society Seán Stafford) standing near cairns at Wormhole.

Tim Robinson[13] also refers to a series of similar small funerary cairns in the Aran Islands, 'which represents a rare survival of a fine and ancient custom almost into present times'. He, too, relates a sinister purpose behind their construction:

> A superstition I have heard of in regard to this custom of halting to build a cairn on the way to the graveyard was that it 'stopped the Devil'. The practice is no doubt ancient...

Although the earliest reference Tim Robinson could get to such cairn building was in Haddon and Browne's report of 1892[14], he was of the opinion that the building of cairns persisted right down to the 1960s, and concluded that they might not be quite extinct. In this he is quite correct, because the *Western People*[15] carried a report of the official opening in 1995 of the new Ballinrobe golf course at Cloonacastle, which included these words from Fr. Denis Crosby:

> ... Horrific evictions had taken place at Cloonacastle, when famine racked the land in Black '47. Some had died on the site and their bodies were never taken away. 'We remember and honour them this evening and as part of our project, we have built cairns of stones in their memory. In sadness, we gathered the stones off the fairway, but tonight we are in a totally different spirit and we are fortunate to belong to such a peaceful and gracious time.

While the erection of these later cairns adds to the total number of such monuments, the vast majority of the original wayside cairns have now disappeared. According to the *Archaeological Inventory of County Galway*, Vol. 1, West Galway, pp. 139-141, 'Owing to their wayside location, over 25% of the cairns listed here have unfortunately been destroyed probably for use as road metal'. Máire Nic Néill explains, (p. 60):

> In the last century many of the little cairns along our roads were removed by road-makers and repairers. Nevertheless, there is ample evidence that to remove one was regarded as a very dangerous undertaking, particularly to one's health.

She then goes on to list many of the misfortunes which befell those who interfered with the monuments as listed in the questionnaires on the death-cairn custom sent out to collectors and correspondents throughout the country in 1938-9 by the Irish Folklore Commission. Sadly, these tales of woe have not stopped destruction at 'the field of monuments' at Moycullen. From information orally handed down in the old Irish style from Bartholamew and Maureen King to their son Peter, William Henry noted in 1996:-

> When I first noticed these monuments over 14 years ago, there were about twelve monuments there. Bartholamew King told me that when he was a young man, there were over eighty of these monuments in that field. Sadly, today, there is only one complete *leacht*, and five others which have had a lot of the the stones removed. Some *leachts* collapsed when cattle used them as scratching posts, others

disappeared possible due to land reclamation and the latest problem is people stopping their cars, not as a mark of respect, but to remove stones for decorative purposes in their gardens.

Today, on examining the two-acre field in question, only five large cairns are still visible beside the road while the remains of many more, including some of only a few stones set together, are often difficult to distinguish amid the stone-strewn field in which they lie. The field is on the right-hand side of the road going from Moycullen to Collinamuck, (O.S. 6" sheet 55, Nat. Grid Ref: 660 035), about five miles from Moycullen. The cairns, all composed of various sized limestones, are (September, 1997) in the following state of preservation:-

A. Is 1.10 m. in diameter and stands 1.08 m. high. It has its top portion demolished, which is not surprising, as it is now incorporated into the roadside wall and has only large stones left.

B. Is practically denuded of all its small stones on the south side, but is 150 cm in diameter and stands 108 cm high.

C. The best preserved cairn. It is 1.30 m. in diameter and stands 1.52 m. high, consisting of both large and small stones.

D. This may have been one of the largest of the cairns, as suggested by its wide boulder base. While its south side has completely slipped, it still is 1.60 m. in diameter and stands 1.70 m. high.

E. Much denuded of its smaller stones, it is 1.20 m. in diameter and stands 1.26 m. in height. It has mostly collapsed on its south side.

At the time of writing these notes, William Henry pointed out a rather intriguing triangular-shaped *leacht* hidden amongst the vegetation at the far end of the field. Its dimensions are as follows: 1.62 X 1.62 X 1.33 m. and 1.00 m. high.

Although noted by the term, Laght, in the ordnance survey maps of the district, the Wormhole monuments are not, as yet, listed in the *County Galway Sites and Monuments Records*. This should be done immediately as they represent archaeological evidence of a funerary custom already fading rapidly from the folk memory of people in that area.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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NOTES

1 Michael Herity in lecture on 'Hermit Islands in the Atlantic' given jointly to the Westport Historical Society and the R.S.A. I. at the Bevir Trust Lecture and Excursion, 26 May, 1995.
2 Jim Higgins, *The Early Christian Cross Slabs, Pillar Stones and Related Monuments of County Galway, Ireland,* BAR International Series, 375 (i), 1987, p. 34.
3 Rev. C. Scantlebury, S.J., *Saints and Shrines of Aran Mór,* Irish Messenger Series, pp. 10-11.
4 Redmond OHanlon, 'The Last Keeper of the Book of Armagh', *Ireland's Own,* June 1987, p.28.
5 A. Smith, 'Journey to Connaught' in *The Miscellany of the Irish Archaeological Society,* Vol. 1, p. 170. 1846.
6 *Connacht Tribune,* 30 July, 1976.
7 Richard Hayward, *The Corrib Country,* Dundalk, 1968, p.31.
8 J.A. Fahy, *The Glory of Cong,* Cong, 1978, pp. 19-20.
9 Etienne Rynne, 'Leacht Oliver Brown' in *The Athenry Journal,* Vol. 1, No. 2, August 1995, p. 16.
10 B.R.S. Megaw, 'Funeral Resting Cairns in Scotland', *Scottish Studies,* Vol. 5, Part 2, 1961, p. 204.
11 E. Estyn Evans, *Irish Folkways,* London 1957, pp 292-293.
12 C. M. Arensberg, *The Irish Countryman,* 1937, p. 216.
13 Tim Robinson, *Mementos of Mortality,* Roundstone 1991, p.5.
14 A.C. Haddon and C.R. Browne, 'The Ethnography of the Aran Islands', *PRIA,* Ser III, Vol. II, 1892-3.
15 *Western People,* 31 May, 1995.

# MISCELLANEA

## SOME PLACE-NAMES IN LARKIN'S 1819 MAP OF GALWAY

"The principal defect of the Ordnance Survey maps is, however, cultural or idealogical. All placenames inscribed on these maps ... were Anglicised ... It is a pleasure to note that a more recent map from the Ordnance Survey ... offers the correct Irish form ... It would appear that the official cartographers of the Irish Republic are beginning to emerge from under the imperial slabs laid down over a century and a half ago."

Thus the distinguished critic Gerry Dukes in an essay (in *The Recorder, Journal of the American Irish Historical Society*, v.10,1-2, spring-fall, 1997) with the title 'Fear na mapaí: Tim Robinson on Árainn,' introducing a charming essay by Robinson, fantasyful and erudite, on the vastness of the universe.

Gerry Dukes's words repeat an assumption one has already heard expressed by Robinson himself, in a lecture to the Galway Historical and Archaeological Society, and which had its most forceful expression in Brian Friel's successful play *Translations*. The assumption is that the Ordnance Survey's cartographers of the mid-19th century were implementing a deliberate policy of colonisation and de-Gaelicisation by clamping a new and Anglicising nomenclature on a map of Ireland which was either blank, or filled in the folk-mind with purely Irish-language placenames. However useful as a creative dramatic device, this assumption cannot be supported by documentary evidence.

Indeed, since we learnt in primer-book logic that the particular can disprove the general, an examination of Larkin's 1819 map of Galway will readily show the wide acceptance at that date of forms of Irish placenames adapted to English orthography. It will also show that instances of translation, in the sense in which that term is used in Friel's play, are very, very few.

Larkin's map of Galway, one of those known as Grand Jury maps, was executed when the Ordnance Survey was at most a gleam in the eye of modernising bureaucrats and executed, presumably, for the cess-raising, road-building and other purposes of the county Grand Jury. The map, a useful source, merits only one brief reference in the voluminous *Galway: history and society* (Geography Publs., 1996). I here use the 1989 Phoenix Maps reprint of that version of Larkin which was 'reduced from the large map on sixteen sheets.' There is a copy of that original large (very large) map in the James Hardiman Library, NUI, Galway.

I take as a random sample a rectangular tract of land with its north-west corner about 3km. south of Athenry. This tract, measuring about 17km., west-east and 23km. north-south, yields on the Larkin map one hundred and thirty-five placenames as follows:

Abramville
Acrimore
Aggard
Aggardbeg
Ashfield
Athenry
Ballagherin
Ballamore
Ballarua
Ballinacreggy
Ballinagrieve
Ballinahown
Ballinamicka
Ballincurra
Ballovinna
Ballycaddy
Ballycooney
Ballygarry
Ballyling
Ballymana
Ballyshea
Barnageeha
Barragurraun
Blackgarden
Blackrock
Boukeen
Cahabeg
Caher
Caheraman
Caheranamer Bridge
Caherlawey
Cahernamuck
Cahertrim
Capard
Carcray
Carhanrymore
Carignoe [spelling?]
Carrybracken
Cascarrig
Castleboy
Cloona
Clostoken
Colesgrove
Copanagh
Corruebeg
Cosmona
Crawell
Cregamalgrena
Cregmore
Crinoge
Cumastigh [spelling?]
Curheen
Curragh
Derravakeel
Derryhoyle
Derrynamicka
Dramacosan
Dunkellin
Dunsandal
Edenhill
Feenaugha
Ferriskyle [spelling?]
Fidan
Finchalhaun
Glanamiltogue
Glanatallen
Grange
Granna
Greyford
Grousehill
Gurtacnuckaun
Holly Park
Imlagh
Isserkelly
Kilcriest
Killconickney
Killeenadeamur
Killeenpatrick
Killimon
Killora
Kiltartan
Kilthomas
Knockaphehaven
Knockash
Knockruagh
Kylebeg
Kylebein
Kylegorra
Kylenadissa
Kylenagappal
Lackalea
Lackile

Lakerrig
Lambert Lodge
Leanagarra
Lecken
Lime Park
Lisaneena
Lisheen
Lisnabego
Lissadile
Lough Burk
Loughrea
Loughvelshea
Mannin
Moneen
New England
Newtown
Olatard
Persse Lodge
Peterswell
Raherneen
Rathorgan
Reaskmore
Riverstown
Riverville
Roxborough
Rugh
Rughmore
Rugsbero
St. Clerans
Seefin
Shragh
Sleiverua
Strongford
Tadrican
Templemartin
Thombaun
Tinageeragh
Tourmaknaveen
Toutoobantample
Turoe
Woodville

These names relate to villages, towns, parishes, baronies, hills, 'gentlemen's seats,' or other features. (These is one which I was unable to read, due to the poor impression either of the original plate or in the re-print before me.)

It will be readily seen that the vast majority of them conform to the loose standard of writing originally Irish-language names according to the conventions of English orthography - which is by no means the same as 'translation' in the Friel sense. Fifteen begin with 'Bally' or a variant, eight with 'Kil' or variant, six with 'Caher,' and so on. Nineteen may be described as more fully Anglicised. They are:

Abramville
Ashfield
Blackgarden
Blackrock
Colesgrove
Edenhill
Greyford
Grousehill
Holly Park
Lambert Lodge
Lime Park
Newtown
New England
Persse Lodge
Peterswell
Riverstown
Riverville
Roxborough
Strongford

Some of these, Lambert Lodge and Persse Lodge, for example, are clearly the names of gentlemen's seats, and some can be shown from other sources to be exactly that, Lime Park and Roxborough. It is just possible that some are perversions of Irish language originals. An 'Edenhill' could have been an '...Éadan coille.' And it is possible that some are placenames which submerged and supplanted earlier townland names.

I can identify only one which betrays a formation comparable to those recited in Friel's play: Strongford. Strongford Mill is situated in the townland of Caherdangan, and Strongford is a near miss for 'strong fort.' But this is a version from Larkin or his informant, years before the activity of the Ordnance Survey reporters. The most important of those reporters, the scholar John O'Donovan, in his letters from the field in Galway to headquarters in Dublin, cites Larkin's map as one of his resources.

Of course the Ordnance Survey made mistakes. I lived once in the townland denominated by the Ordnance Survey as Kilroghter. The first 'r' is just such a mistake, an error in transcription arising somewhere in the progress from notes to letters, from letters to drafting, from drafting to engraving. If the local pronounciation had been rendered in accordance with the Larkin conventions it would have appeared as 'Kyleoughter,' presumably deriving from the Irish 'Coill Uachtair.' But such a mistake or a single 'Strongford' in one hundred and thirty five names can hardly be held to constitute a conspiracy.

The Anglicisation of the place-names of Ireland was a long process which began when feudal laws relating to property required that the names of places be written down in deeds and charters by Anglophone bureaucrats. The tireless O'Donovan and his associates had nothing to do with it. And if they had done what some seem to think they were remiss in omitting to do, had written the names of places in Ireland in their Irish-language forms, were there more than a few dozen people in the world who could have read them?

Alf Mac Lochlainn

# EXCAVATION OF AN ENCLOSURE AT TUAM, CO. GALWAY

The excavation of one half of an enclosure site, through which a proposed pipeline corridor, part of the Tuam Regional Water Supply Scheme was to be located, took place between 26th April and 2nd June 1995. The site is in the townland of Townparks (1st division) on the NW outskirts of Tuam, Co. Galway (Fig. 1). The writer undertook the work for the Archaeological Services Unit, U.C.G., which was contracted by Galway County Council to investigate the archaeology of this section of pipeline corridor. The site was divided into roughly two halves by an old field boundary running SSW-NNE. The more eastern half was that excavated.

No extant remains were visible at this location apart from the very faint traces of a possible enclosing ditch. The site was marked in the Sites and Monuments Record for County Galway as 'Enclosure site' (S.M.R. No. 029:170). The western portion of an enclosure was marked on the relevant 1st and 3rd editions of the Ordnance Survey 6-inch map (Galway No. 29) and on the 25-inch sheet (Galway No. XXIX-15) (Fig. 1). That half of the enclosure, is likewise no longer extant. The site was situated in gently rolling pastureland, on land sloping gently away to the south.

Eight trenches, A-H, were excavated during the course of the excavation (Fig. 2). Trenches A, B and C were excavated at right angles to the pipeline corridor and ran in a WNW-ESE direction. These three trenches measured 2m in width and 20m in length. Trench D was located 7.6m SSW of Trench A and Trench E was located 1.2m NNE of Trench C. Both were orientated NNE-SSW and measured 8m in length and 3m in width. The remaining three trenches (F, G and H) were 'extensions' of Trench C, excavated to reveal the full extent of an entrance feature first discovered in Trench C. All three had the same orientation as Trench C, and the same dimensions as each other, 4m in length and 2m in width.

The excavation produced evidence of the ESE half of a single-ditched circular enclosure (illus. 2). There was also evidence of the remains of a bank just inside the ditch which must have been levelled at some time in the past. The remains of the bank were apparent in the fills of the ditch in Trenches A, B, C, D and H. The original entrance to the enclosure was uncovered in the ENE of the site (Pl. 1). It measured 5m in width and 2.3m in length. Its NNW side was stone-faced (Pl. 2). The opposing SSE face of the entrance was probably also stone-faced, but this facing was apparently removed in antiquity. The interior of the enclosure produced no evidence of habitation, its stratigraphy consisting mainly of topsoil underlain by disturbed subsoil, located above the natural subsoil. The only features uncovered consisted of four minor ditches (0.8-2.1m in width and 0.5-0.6m in depth) at the western ends of Trenches A, B, C and D. The topsoil and underlying disturbed subsoil contained a mixture of modern and post-medieval artifacts. Local knowledge of this field's use in more recent times as a pet cemetery was evidenced by the uncovering of small animal burials located in Trenches C and D.

The evidence from the excavation would suggest that this site probably was a livestock enclosure. No habitation features were found, and the highly indented natural subsoil located near the surface would indicate livestock having been kept here, the indentations being caused by the hoofs of livestock in very wet conditions. The proximity of two

Fig. 1: Location map.

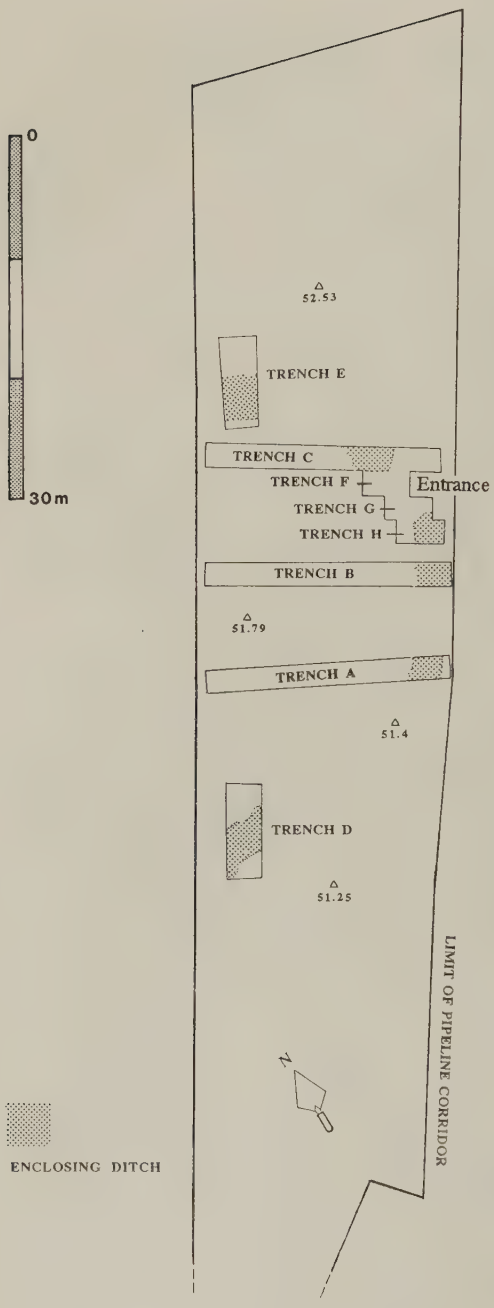



Fig. 2: Plan of the area excavated.

further enclosures in the immediate area (visible on the 1932 edition of the 6-inch Ordnance Survey map) would suggest that one of those may have served as a centre for human occupation.

The four small ditches found at the western ends of Trenches A, B, C and D are probably the remains of old drainage ditches. They appear to be part of a single feature which runs into the main ditch enclosing the site. This could mean that they were contemporaneous with the main period of usage of the enclosure. The large ditch which enclosed this site has been partially destroyed, in particular its ESE side, visible in Trench A.

None of the artifacts recovered during the excavation pre-date the post-medieval period. This is disappointing when we consider the two dates extracted through the radiocarbon dating of two small samples of charcoal, one of which was taken from the stone facing of the entrance and the second from the sandy clay loam located between the stone facing and the natural boulder clay there. The dates obtained were 905±40BP (calibrated to 1030AD-1220AD) and 1410±65BP (calibrated to 450AD-770AD) respectively. The modern and post-medieval finds, as well as the different dates, seem to point to the continual use of the site from the Early Historic Period, through Medieval times, to the recent past. The difference in dates could be as a result of the repair of the stone facing at a later period in the usage of the enclosure, or as a result of the charcoal sample from the stone facing being intrusive.

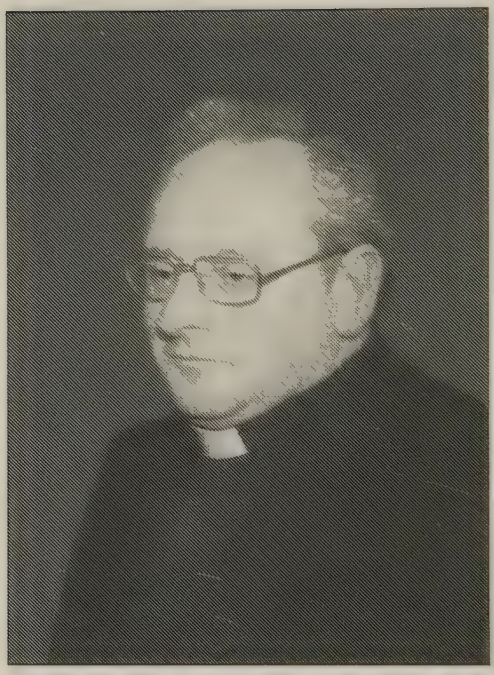
Richard Crumlish

*(Photographs are by the author)*

Pl. 1: The original entrance to the enclosure ENE of the site.

Pl. 2: Stone facing on NNW side of the site.

# MARTIN COEN, 1933-1997



News of the death on 2 December 1997 of Fr Martin Coen, at the relatively young age of 64, was received with genuine sadness by his many friends, including his fellow historians. While Fr Martin had not been in good health for some time – and while his life had been dogged by accidents and by dark clouds for many years – the end came rather sooner than many of us had expected. He suffered much in his illnesses, and from the medication which they increasingly demanded, and his journey to his final peace with his Maker was not an easy one.

Martin Coen was a gifted and scholarly local historian. If the religious life was his vocation, history was his passion. Born on 6 October 1933 at Raheen House, Kiltartan, Martin received his early schooling in Kiltartan and at St Mary's College, Galway. He studied for the priesthood at the Irish College in Rome, where he was ordained in 1958. Following a short period of pastoral duties (in Liscannor) and at St Mary's College, he returned to the Irish College in Rome in 1966. It was a posting cut short by the first of his illnesses. It is fair to say that Craughwell and Rome were his two great reference points (cultural as well as personal) for the rest of his life. He enjoyed (and enjoyed recounting in later years) his 'Roman' exploits. The grace of life as well as the pivotal religious significance of Rome excited him; his conversation when in sunny mood in later life was often punctuated by phrases of Italian (and by well-informed references to ancient monuments, fine architecture and fine wine).

Returning to pastoral work in the diocese, Martin made significant contributions, in many different ways, to Irish ecclesiastical and to Galway local history. His scholarly work is well-represented by his original postgraduate research on the [Catholic] *Wardenship of Galway*, published as a monograph in 1984. Its importance and originality has been acknowledged by scholars with an

interest in Irish ecclesiastical or in Galway local history. But he published a large number of articles, which, whether intended for a scholarly or a general readership, were always well-informed and well-written. In the diocesan magazine *The Mantle*, in the newspaper column, *Galway Gleanings*, that he wrote for a number of years (some articles of which represented basic and original research), and in the Craughwell magazine. *The Blazer*, Martin's joy in historical research is always evident. His love of his own place and people – Kiltartan, Gort and Craughwell, the literary and social luminaries, above all the life of the Catholic community, priests and people, of the Galway Diocese – this love shines through all his writings and his cultural activities throughout the years of his ministry.

His contributions to scholarly journals were judicious and based on solid research. Three articles from his pen appeared in our *Journal* – 'Anach Cuain' in vol. 34, 1974-75. 'Sir William Gregory' in Vol. 35, 1976, and 'The choosing of Oliver Kelly for the See of Tuam 1809-15' in Vol. 36, 1977-78. He also edited this *Journal* from 1971-1984, sharing the first two years with the late Tom O'Neill as co-editor.

Given the health problems with which he was burdened, his overall contribution was truly remarkable. Moreover, his passion for local history never clouded his sense of judgement and discrimination; he knew what standards of scholarship meant and he judged himself and others by those standards.

Those whom he taught have spoken of him as a gifted teacher. This will surprise none of those who knew him: he combined a passion for his subject with good communication skills and a consideration and kindness for people which must have impressed his students. When his life shone brightly, he was the best of company, as a dinner companion or late-night caller for a conversation. A great fund of stories, a sharp wit, a warm sense of humour (spiced with mischief but utterly free of malice – he took pleasure in signing himself Máirtín Ó Cadhain when sending me offprints or miscellanea), he brought people and events to life with a true raconteur's style.

Go raibh leaba i measc na naomh ag anam uasal Mháirtín.

G. Ó T.

## NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

PATRICK M. (PADDY) HOGAN is an overseas member of this Society who has resided in Perth, W. Australia since 1978. A previous contributor to this *Journal* 1981-82 and 1985-86. His continuing research interest is in late 18th century Connacht history. He has taught in Galway, London and Durban (S. Africa), and is currently on the teaching staff of the Alexander International College in Perth.

J.W. O'CONNELL is arts editor of the *Galway Advertiser* and general editor of *Magpie*, the west of Ireland arts and entertainment magazine. He is the author of *St Colman's Church, Kinvara*, and *Kinvara History, A family affair*; co-editor and contributing author of the Tir Eolas publications, *The Book of the Burren, The Book of Aran*, and six guides and maps to Kinvara, South Galway, the Burren, and Medieval Galway. He has a particular interest in the Tribal families of Galway, and has completed a full length study of the Frenches of Duras, Co. Galway. He is currently working on a study of the Kirwan family, and is also a member of this Society.

DAVID C.A. WILKINS is descended from Captain Thomas Harrison, Paymaster of the Galway Militia from 1810 to 1823 and his interest in the regiment was initially prompted by his family history research.

JAMES MITCHELL is a patron and honorary vice-president of this Society. He is a frequent contributor to our *Journal.*

TIMOTHY COLLINS graduated in science from UCG, where he studied botany, geology and zoology. He has kept up his interest in these subjects over the years by publishing much on the history and bibliography of Irish science. A regular contributor to this *Journal*, he is a committee member of the Society.

CHRISTIAAN CORLETT is a native of Co. Wicklow and is a graduate of UCD. Presently working as a contract archaeologist throughout Ireland, particularly in the north-west of the country. He is a co-founder and Inaugural Chairman of the County Wicklow Archaeological Society. His article on prehistoric Kilgeever was published in Vol. 49, 1997, of this *Journal.*

JAMES LYTTLETON is a freelance archaeologist, and a graduate of U.C.D. (now NUI, Dublin), where he received the M.A. degree in 1997. He has excavated in many parts of the country, including the excavation in Castle St., Galway.

TADHG O'KEEFFE holds a Ph.D. degree from University College, Dublin, where he is on the staff of the Department of Archaeology. He has lectured and published exensively on Medieval settlement, society and landscape.

CAITRÍONA CLEAR lectures in history at the National University of Ireland, Galway, and has published (with Máirín Johnson) *Growing up poor* for the Galway Labour History Group. Her latest book, *Nuns in nineteenth century Ireland*, (Dublin and Washington) appeared last year. She has also published several articles on women's work in twenteenth century Ireland, and on homelessness during the post-famine period. She is a member of this Society.

PEADAR O'DOWD is lecturer on Information Technology and Heritage Studies in Galway/Mayo Institute of Technology. He is the author of several books on the heritage of Galway, both city and county. His most recent publication, *Galway City*, was published earlier this year. He is also President of this Society.

ALF MAC LOCHLAINN is a retired Librarian who has published work in a variety of fields, mainly in social history and bibliogrphay. His surrealist novella *Out of Focus* appeared in 1977, and *Two Galway Schools* (with Tony Ryan), published in 1993. Dalkey Archive Press has published his collection of stories and novellas, *The Corpus in the Library.* He is a member of the Society.

RICHARD CRUMLISH is director of the Archaeological Services Unit, Oranmore Industrial Park, Claregalway Road, Oranmore.

BERNARD O'HARA is head of Business Studies and Humanities in Galway/Mayo Institute of

Technology, and Hon. Treasurer of this Society. He has published numerous articles and books, including *The Archaeological Heritage of Killasser, Co. Mayo,* and an account of the first twenty five years of the Galway RTC.

JOHN A. (TONY) CLAFFEY is a retired secondary teacher and president of the Old Tuam Society, and long-time member of the GAHS. On post-graduation at UCG in Old Irish and medieval Irish history he availed of a travelling studentship to Iceland University, Reykjavik. His publications include *A history of Moylough-Mountbellew*, part i, and *Glimpses of Tuam since the Famine.*

PETER HARBISON is an archaeologist who, until recently was editor of Bord Fáilte's colour magazine *Ireland of the Welcomes*, and is author of several books, including *Pilgrimage in Ireland* (1991) and *The High Crosses of Ireland* (1992). He is also author of the well-known *Guide to National and Historicl Monuments of Ireland* (1993).

GORDON HERRIES DAVIES is a Fellow Emeritus of Trinity College Dublin. For more than forty years he has lectured widely on the geomorphology of Ireland and the history of Irish geology. He is a member of the Royal Irish Academy and of the International Commission on the History of Geological Sciences. He was founder chairman of the Irish National Committee for the History and Philosophy of Science. His first book *The earth in decay*, a history of British geomorphology, was published in 1969. His later books include *Sheets of many colours*, a history of Irish cartography, published by the Royal Dublin Society in 1983 and, most recently, *North from the Hook*, a sesquicentennial history of the Geological Survey of Ireland, published in 1995.

GEARÓID Ó TUATHAIGH is Associate Professor of History at the National University of Ireland, Galway. His publications are mainly in nineteenth and twentieth century Irish and British history. A Fellow of the Royal Historical Society, he is also currently a member of the Irish-U.S.A. Fulbright Commission. He is a committee member of this Society.

ROBERT MAC CARTHY is Rector of the Collegiate Church of St. Nicholas, Galway, and Provost of Tuam. He is the author of *The Trinity College Estates 1800-1923* (Dundalgan Press, Dundalk, 1992). He is a member of this Society.

WILLIAM HENRY is a native of Galway. He has a lifelong interest in history and archaeology, and is a committee member of this Society, and of the Old Galway Society. He has qualifications in local history and archaeology from NUI Galway, and is a part-time lecturer in these subjects at the Galway/Mayo Institute of Technology. His book on the Burke and Wills expedition to the interior of Australia, *The shimmering waste*, was published in 1997.

HERMANN RASCHE lectures in the Department of German, NUI, Galway. He holds the M.A. and Ph.D. degrees from the University of Freiburg, Germany. His published work includes articles on German-Irish literary and culture relations. He is a regular contributor to the German quarterly magazine *irland journal.* His article on 19th century German travellers in the west of Ireland appeared in Vol. 47, 1995, of this *Journal.*

MICHAEL FARRELLY is a graduate in History of the National University of Ireland, Galway. He is currently completing an M.A. dissertation on the early social history of cinema in Ireland.

# REVIEWS

John A. Claffey (ed.), *Glimpses of Tuam since the Famine*, Old Tuam Society, 1997, pp xiv + 254, ISBN 0 9530250 04. Paperback. No price stated.

There is a growing interest in local history with its exaltation of a sense of place and good publications on the subject are always welcome. *Glimpses of Tuam since the Famine*, edited by John A. Claffey (a member of this society), is indeed such a publication. It provides interesting insights into some events and people in Tuam from the period of the Great Famine to recent times.

By the eighteen-twenties and thirties, Tuam was similar to most small towns in the west of Ireland, suffering the effects of economic stagnation, famine, disease and desperation. This publication begins in 1836 with an account by Brother Vincent Jordan of Archbishop John McHale withdrawing the local school at Prospect from the national system and placing the Franciscan Brothers in charge.

During the Great Famine, the population of Tuam Union, an area roughly ten miles in radius, fell by over 26% and left the town with two mass graves and an overcrowded parish cemetery. Its effects would have been worse were it not for the work of the Mercy and Presentation Sisters as recalled here by Mary P. Cryan. These horrific days are captured in a report from the *Tuam Herald* of 10th May 1851 about the post mortem of a poor man named John McCormack and the mud cabins described by Henry Coulter in 1862.

In 1851, the Franciscans were replaced by the Christian Brothers in Prospect school and the book contains an admission register for 1863 with names, addresses, ages and parents' occupations; as well as an account by Matthias Bodkin, about his youthful days in Tuam and his role in the burning of Prospect school.

Some famed Tuam personalities of the period are featured: Dick Dowling, a hero of the American Civil War, by P.D. O'Donnell; John Dennis, renowned for his interest in racing, by Patrick Melvin; Martin Andrew O'Brennan, a Mayo-man who achieved some fame as the founder of the *Connaught Patriot* newspaper in Tuam in 1859, and Mark F. Ryan, 1844-1940, a Fenian and member of the supreme council of the IRB, who became a medical doctor.

The restoration of St. Mary's Cathedral, 1863-78, which safely embraced its jewel, the ancient chancel arch, is recalled by John A. Claffey. The same author provides an interesting account of the Tuam Diocesan School, which won acclaim for various academic achievements. The Intermediate Examinations of 1879-80, the Presentation Sisters and the National Board, and an article on Brother Hoctor, Superior of Tuam CBS 1905-14, together with the other contributions on education, show how Tuam met its educational needs. During the later part of the nineteenth century, the town was synonymous with education, as it is today.

Paul Mohr has an interesting account of John Birmingham of Millbrook (see also his article on the same subject in *JGAHS*, Vol. 46, 1994, pp 111-155). This is followed by a laudatory appreciation of Archbishop John McHale written by Cardinal Gibbons in 1916. Aided by Archbishop McHale, Tuam became an important centre for the revival of the

Irish language, due in no small way to the work of a Castlebar-born priest, An Canónach Uilleog De Búrca (Canon Ulick Bourke), 1829-87, as recalled by Proinsias Ó Maolmhuaidh. There is an article taken from the summer 1972 issue of *Comhar* entitled 'Seán Mag Fhlainn agus an *Tuam News*' le Mairín Ní Mhuiríosa, which outlines his big contribution to the Gaelic revival.

An account of life in 'Castlegrove House' in 1894 is reproduced, followed by 'The Athenry and Tuam Railway 1858-1900', and 'The Teskeys - Palatines with a Tuam Connection'. We have 'Recollections of Tuam 1912-16' by W. & N. Comerford; 'Tuam and the Irish Volunteers 1914-15' by John H. Waldron taken from a series of articles in the *Tuam Herald*, and 'The Republican Courts in Tuam' by Marie O'Neill. There is also a profile of a remarkable English-born woman, Eibhlín Bean Mhic Choisdealbha, (Eileen Costello), 1870-1962, who served as a judge in the Republic Court, chairperson of Tuam Town Commissioners in 1921, and made a big contribution to the cultural life of the community.

Social history is not forgotten with contributions on 'Housing - An Ongoing Calamity' (extracts from two publications in 1914 and 1919 respectively), and 'A Town Clerk Remembers' by John P. White. John Cunningham (a member of this society) recalls 'Bobby Burke, Christian Socialist' and his crusade for better housing in Tuam during the 1930s in the concluding article in this book.

A preface by the erudite editor links each of the thirty contributions into the fabric of an outline history of Tuam since the Famine. Overall, this is a fine publication, with good notes and source data, containing very few typographical blemishes. It can be recommended to anyone with an interest in the recent history of Tuam or in Irish local studies.

Bernard O'Hara

Michael J. Hughes, History and folklore of the Barony of Clare (Galway, 1997), pp 184. Paperback. £8.00. (Private publication)

Local studies can be given a variety of territorial limits. The town, parish and county have the advantage of being areas with which people easily identify. Not so the barony, and presumably for this reason barony studies are something of a rarity.

The Barony of Clare is a well-defined area of North Galway. In Gaelic times it was known as Maigh Seola, its capital was at Loch Cime (Lough Hacket) and its mythological headquarters Knockma. The eleventh century saw its rulers take the name O'Flaherty. Their expulsion westwards from Maigh Seola was begun by the O'Connors and completed by the Normans.

Michael J. Hughes takes a broad canvas in his *History and folklore of the barony of Clare* and often brings the reader well beyond the barony limits. He begins with the very first entry in the Annals of the Four Masters and ends with Jack Lynch's visit to the locality in 1972 when the Common Market was on his mind. Inevitably such parameters leave coverage very thin and generalised in places. On the other hand there is a lot of interesting detail from the recent past starting with the Great Famine.

Starvation was never far away in nineteenth century Ireland and it returned to wreak

havoc on the barony's population between 1846 and 1850. We get glimpses of this catastrophe as it affected Annaghdown, Cummer, Headford, Tuam and other places together with the responses it evoked from government, priests, merchants and the general public.

The Land War is another subject to which the author devotes special attention. The voice of the people, stunned to silence by the Famine, is now audible in every parish. This agitation resulted in the Land Acts at national level and, in the West, the further outcome of the Congested Districts Board.

The barony of Clare, unlike that of Athenry and its vicinity, was not associated with the 1916 Rising but was deeply affected by the subsequent War of Independence and Civil War. The author gives enough examples to illustrate the very disturbed condition of the area where the injuries then inflicted took a long time to heal.

The 1932 election campaign is spotlighted in Tuam with de Valera and Paddy Hogan giving expression to opposite sides of the bitter political divide. In the following year Tuam was favoured with a sugar factory but clearly its benefits to the region were far outweighed by the losses sustained in the economic war.

Rural electrification, we are rightly reminded, was the big transformation of the 1950s. A few decades later came group water schemes, another local godsend. The third stride to modernity is given as secondary education, made available to the entire barony with the opening of the Presentation College, Headford, in 1953, the first Catholic co-educational school in the country.

Annotation in the history section leaves much to be desired. References to sources of information are lacking throughout, and much of the lengthy footnote material could have been assimilated into the text. Here T.W. Moody's "Rules for contributors" in *Irish Historical Studies*, January 1968, would have been an invaluable aid.

The history and folklore of the barony are separately indexed and kept well apart by a very interesting collection of photographs and a third section on maps and statistics. Nevertheless history has found its way into the folklore section. Thus Colonel Nolan figures in both but his 'Castles of Clare Barony' in vol. I of this Journal is surprisingly overlooked. (In addition to naming these thirty-six castles and their owners in 1586 O'Flaherty's *Iar Connaught* gives Maigh Seola's subordinate chieftains.)

The folklore of the barony centred around Knockma and its mythical inhabitants whose dealings with mortals varied from the mischievous to the good. Local people were careful to leave the fairy habitat of Knockma alone, but today, because of a FÁS scheme, the summit can be reached by gravel path. Traversed anticlockwise it is the best pedestrian amenity in the barony, if not the county, an undoubted extra bonus for readers of this book.

J.A. Claffey

Kathleen Hughes and Ann Hamlin, *The Modern Traveller to the Early Irish Church*, Four Courts Press, 1997, pp 135. ISBN 1-85182-194-5, paperback only. Price £14.95.

Brian Lacey, *Colum Cille and the Columban Tradition*, Four Courts Press, 1997, pp 104. ISBN 1-85152-321-2, paperback. Price. £6.95.

*Studies in the Cult of St. Columba*. Cormac Bourke (editor). Four Courts Press, 1997, pp 252. ISBN 1-85152-268-2 (hardback) and 1-85152-313-1 (paperback). Price £40 (hardback) and £17.50 (paperback).

1997 marked the 1400th anniversary of the death of St. Columba, perhaps Ireland's greatest churchman and certainly the fieriest of its three 'national apostles'. It is fitting, therefore, that two of the three books under review here should be devoted to him. We are better informed about his career than we are about many another Irish saint because he was fortunate enough to have been the subject of no less than three medieval *Vitae* – one in Latin, and two later ones in Irish. The oldest, and by far the best known, is by Adomnan, Columba's eighth successor as abbot of the great monastery which he founded on the beatific island of Iona in the Inner Hebribes. It has the advantage of having had an author who could gather material from people only a generation or two removed from the saint's lifetime, and who was therefore in a better position to give us insights into Columba's *modus operandi* than the two more fabulised Vitae written many centuries after his death. But even the latest of these Lives – written by Columba's own kinsman, Manus O'Donnell, in 1532 – has its attractions in showing how a thousand years' accrual of legends could make Columba not only the lover of books whose family of monasteries produced some of the most remarkable medieval manuscripts surviving in north-western Europe, but also the man whose successful intervention at the Convention of Druim Ceatt on behalf of his fellow-poets (who were threatened with banishment because of their greed) saved the very existence of Irish literature and paved the way for the heady heights of Nobel prizes in our own day.

Columba, Colm Cille or Columcille, spell him how you will, was not the first person to found a monastery in Ireland, but he was certainly one of the most significant, and someone who laid the foundations for the country's monasteries to become the great cultural centres and fosterers of Irish art which they were to become after his death. There are few books which give a more simple and succinct, yet reliable, introduction to those monasteries than Kathleen Hughes and Ann Hamlin's volume *The Modern Traveller to the Early Irish Church*. Originally published in 1977, and long out of print, it is a joy to have it available again in this re-print by the Four Courts Press. The background from historical sources is painted in broad brush strokes by the late Kathleen Hughes in the first half of the book, and this is followed by Ann Hamlin's attractive overview of the physical remains still to be seen on the monastic sites today (enlivened by sensitively-stippled sketches by Seán Goddard). An addition for the new edition is Ann Hamlin's useful list of suggestions for further reading, which brings an otherwise unaltered volume up to date, though her new introduction does also warn the reader to check access to sites locally – lest it should have changed in the last two decades.

This volume acts as a suitable stage-setting for Brian Lacey's easily readable paperback introduction to Saint Columba himself. Like Hughes and Hamlin, it is clearly designed

for the general public, and provides as much as most of us need to know about the great man from his birth in Donegal around 521 until his death on Iona seventy-six years later. The author sifts through the rich palette of fact and fable found in the three lives and other sources in order to get at the reliable core of information which we can accept as biographical basis for studying the course of Columba's career. In the process, some long-established chestnuts have to take a tumble, including Columba's foundation of the monastery at Derry in 546 (a propaganda invention), and doubt is cast on the story referred to above about Columba saving the poets from banishment. In addition to giving details of the Saint's life, Lacey gives us a very useful summary of the abbots who succeeded him at Iona, including Adomnan, and of the foundations which belonged to the Columban family of monasteries that spanned both sides of the North Channel. But even if Derry was not founded by the saint himself, it gets a whole chapter to itself – unlike Columba's main Irish monastery at Durrow, which does not.

The three books discussed here should be read in the order listed above, and perusal of Lacey will then offer the reader the entrée to the more academic delights offered in the third volume, so ably assembled and edited by Cormac Bourke. It purposely avoids the purely biographical approach and offers instead ten individual studies dealing with varied aspects of the Saint, and traditions associated with himself and Iona. Thomas O'Loughlin looks at the position Iona saw itself occupying in the broader Ocean scene, and the following two studies take a closer look at the monastery of Iona. Aidan MacDonald uses Adomnan's text to reconstruct as much as one can of the life and appearance of the monastery, while Finbar McCormick examines the archaeological evidence both on and beneath the ground. This latter study is particularly helpful as it provides a resumé unavailable elsewhere of the results of many years of excavation, published or unpublished. One curving ditch is found to be possibly contemporary with the saint himself, but the angular *vallum* partially enclosing the monastery is now generally regarded as having probably been in existence before Columba arrived on the island in 563.

Two ladies make considerable contributions of differing kinds – Jennifer O'Reilly providing an overview of the background to the biblical and hagiographical quotations in Adomnan's *Life*, and elucidating the breadth of vision which lies behind his work. Jane Hawkes looks at the representations of the Virgin and Child in insular sculpture and manuscripts, and suggests that a number of model types circulating in Britain, in particular, were copied – but not slavishly – in sculpture at Iona and elsewhere, as well of course as in the Book of Kells. The representation at the end of the arm of the cross at the Columban foundation at Drumcliff, Co. Sligo, belongs to a variant found also at Iona and at Kildalton on Islay, nearby.

There are two very valuable and detailed essays on the Insignia of St. Columba, Ragnall Ó Floinn on 'the corporeal relics of the saint and an array of cult accessories' and the editor himself on bells and croziers. No corporeal relics have survived down to our own day, and these two contributions make us sadly aware of just how many relics have somehow managed to get lost down the centuries, including a fine bejewelled cross which was once on Tory Island, and a flabellum which I still believe is what is copied on a stele at Carndonagh, Co. Donegal.

Finally, Nollaig Ó Muraille brings Reeves rewardingly up to date on the placenames of Ireland and Scotland which can be shown to have Columban associations. Sometimes

these names are taken as evidence of the saint having visited a place (such as Glencolumbkille), but many are probably best seen in the light of the spread of the cult of St. Columba – a subject not specifically covered, but which perhaps ought to have been, in a volume bearing the title *Studies in the Cult of Saint Columba*. Indeed, the umbrella term covers somewhat awkwardly the subject matter of a few of the essays in this volume.

Four Courts Press are to be congratulated on the appearance of these three titles, and my one cavil is directed towards their photographic illustrations, or lack thereof. The picture of St. Kevin's Church at Glendalough on the front cover of the new edition of Hughes and Hamlin I found a depressing disaster; the coloured dust jacket is the only picture in the whole of the Lacey book, and the half-tones in Cormac Bourke's volume leave a lot to be desired in terms of clarity and definition (e.g. page 152). What a pity no one thought of utilising this anniversary year to re-print what I find is the most beautifully illustrated of all the volumes on St. Columba – a charming children's book by Jean Fritz entitled *The Man who loved books*, published by Putnam in New York in 1981, and with magical pictures by Trina S. Hyman.

Peter Harbison

Timothy Collins (editor), *Decoding the landscape*, Centre for Landscape Studies, University College Galway. Second revised edition, 1997, ppx, 170, plates; illus, maps, bibliog. ISBN 0 907775 59 4, pbk. £9.00.

We were making 20 knots in the Indian Ocean. Our ship was a P. & O. liner, the much loved and now lamented *Canberra*, that onetime pride of the yards of Messrs Harland and Wolff. Our destination was Sydney. One of the restaurant staff was Derry-born. I made some remark to him about the satisfaction we must share in finding ourselves aboard a famed Irish liner. His response was vigorous. There was even a tone of anger. 'Precious few of my people helped to build this ship', he snapped. I was chastened. There we were, nine thousand miles from home, the Nicobars on the port beam and the Strait of Malacca ahead, but Ireland was indubitably still with us. For my Derry friend the *Canberra* was held together by Protestant rivets and Protestant welds. This ships – his ship – was for him a strangely alien place.

This book is not about people's relationship to the ships which cleave the world's oceans upon our behalf. This book is about our relationship to the landscapes amidst which we eke out our three score years and ten. Further, the contributions here presented are not about landscapes in any clinical or objective sense. They are about landscapes as we perceive them within our human minds. A rivet driven home in the yards of Harland and Wolff should look much the same as one driven home in the yards of Blohm and Voss. But a Derry mind is prepared to make a distinction. A Queen's Island weld should be identical to a Turku New weld, but in Derry eyes one is hot and provocative while the other is cold and uninspiring. 'For thy mind is a very opal', wrote the Bard, and within that opal we certainly discover remarkable patterns of kaleidoscopic colour.

Here fourteen authors have gazed into the opal as it reflects varied landscapes. Leerssen probes the miasmas of the 'Western Mirage' in the European imagination. Robinson describes his experience of distilling the essence of Connemara into

cartographic form. Travers instructs us in Arabic so that we may better appreciate the landscapes of South Lebanon. Waddell reminds us that our Irish landscapes display evidence of the former importance of water-borne human influences. Ó Madagáin employs a reproduction of Petrie's *Gougane Barra* as a prelude to a discourse on the picturesque in the Gaelic tradition. Whelan offers a revisionist examination of the settlement patterns which characterised the landscapes of the west of Ireland prior to the Famine. Keller treats of some theoretical aspects of landscape analysis from a Norwegian standpoint. Cawley and Ní Scannláin explore facets of nineteenth-century landscape change in Connemara. Collins tells the story of that famed piece of landscape study known to us as the First Clare Island Survey, carried out between 1908 and 1915. Bourke looks at Irish landscapes through the eyes of painters extending from the days of Francis Place to those of Jack Yeats. Sheeran writes of the narrative creation of place in the work of W.B. Yeats. Curtis presents the micro-landscape of a Burren Christmas. Silke proffers a page of versified musings on the landscapes of Connemara.

These thirteen contributions were originally verbal presentations at a 1990 conference held to mark the inauguration of the Centre for Landscape Studies at University College Galway. They were published – and reprinted – during 1994, and now they have achieved the status of a second and revised edition. They have clearly found favour with a widespread reading public. That favour they richly deserve. The volume offers a fascinating *potpourri* of insights into the complex character of landscapes both at home and abroad. The aficionado of landscape study will here find stimulation; the novice student of landscape will here receive inspiration and guidance.

I have a friend who served during World War II as an artillery officer in some army or other. To this day he sees landscapes essentially in terms of the most effective sites for his own and the enemy's guns. I was but a schoolboy during the tumultuous years between 1939 and 1945, but the title of this book does, nevertheless, transport me back to those stirring times. That word 'decoding' makes me think of Bletchley Park, Enigma, Ultra, and the efforts of the British to discover the secrets of the Wehrmacht. It was activity all highly skilled and deeply recondite. Those involved were under an oath of secrecy, and most of them interpreted that oath as having force for a lifetime rather than merely 'for the duration'. Only a few weeks ago a County Tipperary neighbour spoke to me of his late wife, a lady I had known well. 'She worked at Bletchley throughout the War', he said. I was amazed. Of this the lady herself had to let slip not a word.

Should that word 'decoding' make you my fellow passenger on a mental journey into a distant wartime world of abstruse cryptography and enveloping secrecy, then do please resist all temptation towards present despair. The book before us is no Enigma machine. Rather is it a highly readable volume with its messages presented *en clair*. They are messages which must enrich our appreciation of landscapes. They are messages which will significantly assist us in the future management of Irish landscapes.

Gordon L. Herries Davies

Frank Callanan, *T.M. Healy*. Cork University Press,Cork,1996. pp xxvii + 754. plates, no price given. ISBN 1-85918-009-4.

Timothy Michael Healy ( 1855-1931), barrister, parliamentarian, and first Governor-General of the Irish Free State, has, on the whole, had rather a bad press from historians. His reputation, and the judgement made of him as a public man, invariably turns on his role (and responsibility) in the bitter split which attended the fall and final tragic end of Charles Stewart Parnell. The verdict on Healy's role in that episode is overwhelmingly severe. While he cannot, quite, be charged with entrapment, Healy is regularly cast as Iago to Parnell's Othello, the haughty and noble tragic hero, brought down by a fatal flaw of character - his willingness to risk 'all for love' in his attachment to Katherine O'Shea. Predictably, studies of the fall of Parnell (and, indeed,of the years of his rise and ascendancy) have always included substantial treatment of the personality and influence of Tim Healy. Indeed, Callanan's earlier monograph on *The Parnell Split* (1992) paid close attention, very properly, to Healy's role in that turbulent episode.

But, apart from Healy's own memoirs, and the understandably defensive later memoir of his daughter, Maev Sullivan, critical assessments of Healy have, until now, usually appeared in the form of short biographical essays ( including Conor Cruise O'Brien's memorable portrait in *The Shaping of Modern Ireland*, published in 1960), or as sub-themes in the larger political history of the period, or in biographical studies of the other major *dramatis personae* of the Parnellite era (e.g. Parnell himself, John Dillon, William O'Brien). Now, with Frank Callanan's major political life (by his own account almost two decades in gestation) Tim Healy has finally got the full-scale, scholarly study that his long and controversial political career surely merits.

Let it be said at once that Callanan's biography is a work of real distinction. Scrupulous in the use of evidence, perceptive in observation, utterly judicious in judgement (though without a hint of affection for his subject), and confident and courageous in his assessment, Callanan's 'Healy' is written throughout its formidable length in an assured and lucid prose. While Cruise O'Brien's is likely to remain the definitively wicked vignette, Callanan's careful and detailed study of Healy is unlikely to be superceded for a very long time to come. It is only fair to alert the reader to the fact that this is very much a political life of a very public man; apart from a discussion of Healy's prowess as a barrister, there is virtually nothing here of the private, domestic Healy - his family life or his leisure or other interests.

But, given its focus, this is political biography at its most engrossing. The discussion of motive and manner within the 'high' political circles in which Healy operated is thoroughly grounded in a wide range of source material, and the analysis is constantly enlivened by Callanan's command of the material and the context, and by his confident and urbane tone. If there is a criticism that one can reasonably make, it is the decision of the author and publisher not to include either a conventional bibliography ( apart from references and an extended list of abbreviations) or a detailed explanatory note on sources. However, this unfortunate omission does not seriously detract from the sheer quality of the narrative.

Inevitably, the core of the study centres on Healy's relationship with Parnell. Callanan's careful reading of Healy's correspondence - notably with his brother,Maurice - enables him to identify the early evidence of criticism and, at a basic level, of jealousy,

even in the early years when Healy was publicly a strong supporter of Parnell. The account of the critical episode of the Galway by-election of 1886 -when Healy and Biggar opposed Parnell's imposition on Galway of Capt.William O'Shea as the Nationalist candidate, and when public reference was made to Parnell's relationship with Katherine O'Shea - is first class, while his meticulous examination of Healy's role in the divorce scandal and fall of Parnell succeeds in adding important nuances to an episode which has already been the subject of several detailed studies. In its careful analysis of Healy's rhetoric during the split - in all its allusive menace and declamatory venom - Callanan's account supercedes all previous discussion of this topic.

In the rather protracted 'afterlife' of Healy's political career, after the 'split', he was an isolated if regularly impressive parliamentary performer, at odds with former colleagues from the early Parnellite movement, susceptible to flattery or even recognition by the senior players of the two main British parties in Westminster, and increasingly absorbed by his career at the Bar in Ireland. His public utterances, for the most part, in the words of Cruise O'Brien, continued to be characterised by a 'calculated and astonishing violence of language, unerringly directed at vulnerable personalities'. His private language, in his correspondence, was scarcely less lethal, at least when directed towards some of his former colleagues, such as John Dillon. These later years, however, were not entirely sterile, despite the somewhat solitary political course pursued by Healy. His obsession with burying the (now Redmondite) Irish Party, and his shrewd sniffing of the winds of political change, provided Healy with some basis for contact with the emerging Sinn Féin, and Callanan's account of the various moves of 'Healy the survivor' in the turbulent years of revolution and civil strife (1914-1922) is full of interest and insight - not least for its account of Healy's perhaps neglected role in the Treaty negotiations.

This short review cannot hope to do justice to the richness of Callanan's study. One final point, however, demands notice. While in no way discounting the importance of personal antipathy and social sensitivity in explaining the intensity and brutality of Healy's denunciation of Parnell, Callanan argues (persuasively, in my view) that loyalties of deeper historical import were at issue in the affair. For Callanan, Healy's political agenda - both in his opposition to Parnell and Parnellism and in his ardent espousal of peasant proprietorship as a solution to the land question - represented (p.345) ' a crucial chapter in the evolution of modern chauvinistic nationalism. Healy's attack on Parnell strikingly prefigured the writings of D.P.Moran, who is conventionally credited with the invention of chauvinistic nationalism in modern Ireland. That dubious honour belongs rather to Healy'. This proposition - carefully argued by Callanan - will undoubtedly provoke further debate. But there is nothing dubious about the honour that belongs to Frank Callanan for this stylish and fascinating biography of one of the most intriguing, if not necessarily attractive, minor figures in the history of modern Ireland.

Gearóid Ó Tuathaigh

Patrick Fagan, *Divided Loyalties: The question of the oath for Irish Catholics in the Eighteenth Century*. Four Courts Press, Dublin. £35. 256 pp. ISBN 1-85182-252-6.

This interesting book is wider in scope than its title might suggest. It is in effect, the history of the Catholic clergy and better-off catholic laity in the years between the Treaty of Limerick of 1691 and the Catholic Relief Act of 1793. It might be summarised as "to abjure or not to abjure".

It is perhaps not widely known that the ninth article of the Treaty of Limerick provided that only an oath of allegiance should be administered to such Catholics as submitted to William and Mary. The subsequent history of Protestants and Catholics in this island would have been very different had this position been maintained. Sadly it was not. On the Protestant side there soon emerged a determination that Catholics should be excluded from parliament and be prevented from holding any government office (civil, military or ecclesiastical) and be excluded from the practice of the law. A new oath of supremacy was enacted and also a highly objectable declaration against Transubstantiation which of course no believing Catholic could make. All this was as Patrick Fagan points out, a violation of the Articles of Limerick although each piece of penal legislation contained saving clauses in respect of those who could show that they were covered by the Articles of Limerick and it is interesting to know that the last of the Catholic solicitors to practice publicly in accordance with the Articles was a certain Thady Dunne who died in 1748 aged 84.

Meanwhile, what was happening to the Catholic Clergy? There seems to have been practical toleration in the five or six years following the Treaty of Limerick. Seculars and regulars were living quite openly in Dublin and a census for the whole country accounted for 893 seculars and 495 regulars. Initially it seems that the government intended only to banish the regulars – something that would have gained not inconsiderable support from the secular clergy generally – and in the event 424 regulars left Irish ports after the passing of the Act of 1697 which was amended to include bishops also. The secular clergy were left alone but by an Act of 1702 were required to register their abode and parish, only one priest being allowed per civil parish. This was not a hardship since the country was (and is) divided into a multitude of small parishes which have not had (nor needed) a church since medieval times. Thus large parishes which needed more than one priest could have the additional priests registered for sinecure parishes. It should be noted that this registration act did not require either an oath of allegiance nor an abjuration of the Stuarts.

Fagan points out that by the 1730's the religious provisions of the penal laws had become 'largely a dead letter' – Toleration by connivance was something which the clergy learned to live with so comfortably that the majority came to prefer such a situation to the acceptance of an oath of allegiance which would cause divisions on all sides.

Essentially the problem for catholic Ireland was this. Could they in conscience transfer their allegiance from the Stuarts to the Hanoverians bearing in mind that the principal reason why the Stuarts were excluded from the thrones of Britain and Ireland lay in their Roman Catholicism? Nor was this only a problem for Catholics – the refusal of the seven bishops of the Church of England to abjure their allegiance to James II and the subsequent Schism of "non-jurors" should be recalled. Needless to say, the problem became much more entangled in European politics than in theology. The Pope continued to recognise

the Stuarts as rightful Kings of Ireland and to accept their nominations for the Irish bishoprics thus giving ample excuse to the Irish government to cast doubt on the allegiance of all Irish Catholics. Much of the subsequent history of Catholics in the 18th century, was concerned with successive attempts to devise an oath of loyalty to the Hanoverian monarch that would be acceptable to both Pope and government. Let it be said that many Catholic laity and even some priests (12 from Co. Westmeath) took the oaths under the 1704 Acts abjuring the rights of the Stuarts to the throne and indeed the oath eventually accepted by all Catholics under the 1774 Act was not a great deal different. As Fagan shrewdly remarks 'once the political heat had been removed from the equation, it was obviously no sin at all for a Catholic to take the oath of abjuration in order to obtain a degree in Trinity College Dublin, following the 1793 relief Act'. Ironically once the political heat was re-inserted it became once more a sin for Catholics to attend TCD and continued to be so until the early 1960's!

There is a chapter entitled, "Enter the Mitred Earl" which promises a mini-biography of that amazing character, the Earl-Bishop of Derry, but sadly turns outs to be no such thing; while it must be said that the general reader is likely to find the detailed discussion of the negotiations leading up to the Catholic Relief Acts somewhat wearisome. But nonetheless this is an important and well-written work covering a little-known period of Irish history.

Robert Mac Carthy

T.P. Boland, Thomas Carr Archbishop of Melbourne, ISBN 0 7022 2967 9 (hardback), 1SBN 0 7022 2944 X (paperback), University of Queensland Press, 1997, Pp 495, 15 plates.

*We shall not understand the Roman Catholic Church of Melbourne and - considering Mannix's broad influence - of Australia, if we do not take into consideration the man of quiet strength and intelligent humanity who was a prophet in Israel before Daniel entered his lion's den.*

Thus does his biographer, Fr Tom Boland, lead us into the life of 'the genial and urbane' Thomas Carr, (1839-1917) Archbishop of Melbourne (1887-1917) who preceded the legendary Daniel Mannix (1917-1963) in that important ecclesiastical office. According to the blurb on the back cover, we are told that Carr's influence on both church and national life in Australia extended well beyond the turn of the century, providing humane direction and balance in the early, at times uncertain, years of prosperity, war and depression involving that great continent. While his brilliant management and vision made possible the completion of St. Patrick's Cathedral in Melbourne in 1897, he was also active in the temperance movement, and a persuasive advocate for education for the underprivileged. What was just as important was his success at building community bridges, which, we are told, 'his successor may have undermined'!

This comprehensive biography of Archbishop Carr deals mainly with his thirty years of promoting the Catholic ethos in the 'new' continent seeking its rightful place in the modern world. In the initial chapters, however, it gives us a fascinating insight into the Ireland of the time, when, "A new type of bishop was emerging in the reign of Leo XIII, one who saw the dignity of the common man as a right from God".

Thus, from the first chapter entitled simply, 'Childhood', we learn that the young Thomas Carr was born in Lakeview House, Moylough, County Galway, on 10 May, 1839, and grew up among the Carrs, part of the 'numerous class of small landlords who were important in their localities as resident gentry', but not very different, it seems, from large farmers. While Lakeview house was 'tumultuously alive' with his six brothers and five sisters, when the Great Famine struck, 'the future archbishop was old enough to see and understand something of its horrors'. Thomas, however, was soon studying at St. Jarlath's in Tuam where he acted as Mass server to the President, Dr. John MacEvilly, later Archbishop of Tuam. Already in his teens, Thomas had 'rubbed shoulders' with the 'best'.

By 1856, we see him register in Maynooth, where he was to spend twenty years as student and later as professor. An 'enthusiastic and efficient student' he was ordained in 1866, and appointed as curate in Westport. In 1868, he was transferred to Tuam Cathedral and College, where he taught Humanities in the latter, then described as 'a nest of Fenianism'. By 1872, we see him safely back in Maynooth again as Dean of Freshmen and lecturing in 1874 in Theology before being appointed Vice-President in 1880. In that year also he became editor of the *Irish Ecclesiastical Record,* a publication destined 'for Irish priests at home and abroad'. When Archbishop John McHale died in 1881, John MacEvilly, Bishop of Galway, 'automatically assumed the archdiocese' and, not surprisingly, Thomas Carr was his choice as successor in the western capital.

Some fifty-five pages deal with Thomas Carr's reign as Bishop of Galway and twenty more look at the wider picture of a 'Bishop in Ireland'. Both chapters allow us a rare look indeed at the problems, both internal and external, facing the Irish church in the second half of the 19th century on the local as well as national scale. Thus we read of clerical factionalism in Galway such as we see in the author's comment that 'Father Lally was the boon companion of a Mr W. Ferdinand, editor of the *Galway Vindicator*'. Not to be outdone, we learn that Fr Dooley, 'an independently wealthy man, founded the *Galway Pilot* to publicise his sermons and criticise Lally and the *Vindicator*'. On the national front the land war and Parnell fully occupied Carr's as well as the other bishops' minds for much of the time, with Rome omnipresent as always in the background.

We also see the Galway of Carr's time, a city whose port acted as 'a magniciant funnel to carry thousands of Connacht men and women off to America each year'. We are also told that 'The tone of Galway life is clear - wealth and poverty jostling each other, soldiers and nuns, parsons and friars, convicts and clerks crowding the lanes'.

This book is extremely well written and while a few of the words may send the average reader on an excursion of discovery to a good dictionery there is much to recommend it, not least the fascinating story it tells of a man 'who was built for comfort and found it', often in the spas of Lisdoonvarna, 'that haunt of Clerical vice'! Thus, there is much humour also to be noted in this changing world of the cloth for 'Bishops found after ordination that the family circle swelled to meet the width of their new dignity'. Thus did the Irish invent 'the global village'! When he addressed the Catholic Women's Club of Melbourne in 1913 and told them that, 'in England some women aspired to the priesthood and even the episcopate', we are informed that 'The women greeted this Johnsonian chimera with laughter'!

The main portion of the book, however, deals with Thomas Carr's work as Archbishop

of Melbourne. Although destined for more significiant positions in Ireland, he came, at Pope Leo XIII's call to that greatly expanding city in 1897. His pastoral reorganisation and his many actions as 'Defender of the Faith' against all comers, especially in relation to the proposed introduction of the bible into the state schools of Australia are related in some detail in this fine work. Such items as relations with the Australian labour party; the growth of the womens' movement; the various Vatican conferences and councils of his time; the start of the First World War and 1916, down to such varied topics as the League of the Cross and girl scouts all fill these pages with varied interest.

Fr Boland is to be congratulated on compiling such a fine work about Thomas Carr, this Irish emigrant who left such an indelible mark on the history of Australia. Taken together with the great Australian explorer, Robert O'Hara Burke, also from Galway, who died so tragically at Cooper's Creek just sixteen years before Archbishop Carr arrived on that vast southern continent, this county can be said to have contributed greatly to its heritage. This book certainly underlines the bond between Galway and Australia in no uncertain fashion.

Peadar O'Dowd

Niall Ó Ciosáin, *Print and popular culture in Ireland, 1750-1850.* Macmillan Press and (in the U.S.A.) St.Martin's Press, 1997. (£45.00 Ster.) ISBN 0-312-17455-1 in North America. 0-333-66684-4 outside North America.

More than fifty years ago, as a teenager, I was invited to be a guest in the home of a family friend in west Clare. One evening, my host and his brothers, to their great glee, left me alone in the company of an elderly neighbour known to them as a crashing bore. He had a prophecy, which he interpreted and re-interpreted for anybody who would listen. I remember little of the details - there was a great man returning to France, which he interpreted as a reference to General De Gaulle, there was to be a great battle at Singland, near Ventry in county Kerry. Singland I had never heard of, and the name stuck in my memory.

Years later, I came upon a piece of printed ephemera, of 64 pages, 10.5cm., in a flimsy blue wrapper. It was *St. Columb Kille's sayings, moral and prophetic, extracted from Irish parchments together with an extract from Fuaras a Saltoir Cashel ... Dublin, printed for the booksellers.* It was undated but one did not need to be an expert to recognise it as a typical nineteenth century chapbook. The content was hardly from Irish parchments, more likely from the *Annual register.* A clergyman will rise in the south, we are told, that will reform millions from the debasing vice of intemperance, the most intemperate will glory in wearing the badge of sobriety. Again, the remains of a noble warrior, who was once emperor of France, but died an exile in a small African island (a prisoner of the English), will be honourably removed to Paris ... and so forth. Thereafter it lapses into fabulous accounts of the Black Bill for the extermination of the catholics of Ireland, successive invasions and battles, including a battle at Singland, near Ventry!

I am convinced now, of course, that my west Clare informant of 1945 had learnt by heart the text of this chapbook or of some cognate edition. It was my first experience of the penetration of popular culture by the printed word.

Niall Ó Ciosáin is already established as one of a small number of scholars who have devoted attention to that grey area between folklore, on the one hand, and the literature and arts of the establishment on the other; he has already contributed essays, substantially present in the work here under notice, to *The origins of popular literacy in Ireland: language change and educational development 1770-1920* (1990), *Books beyond the Pale* (1996) and *Irish popular culture, 1650-1850* (1997).

The more rounded study now before us is a genre-based account of certain recurring elements in popular literature, that is literature designed and produced for wide-spread dissemination among those elements of the population who could not afford, or would not be reached by what we must call main-stream publications, too dear and/or too esoteric for the mass readership. It is genre-based in the sense that its attention is devoted to specific forms of popular literature - chivalric romances, biographies of rogues and rapparees, certain religious poems (Tadhg Gaedhealach's *Pious miscellany*), socially ameliorative tracts or manuals and two popular historical play-texts, *The battle of Aughrim* and *The siege of Londonderry*.

His opting for this genre-based approach has allowed Ó Ciosáin to set his study on a comparative basis, as there is already a body of work on cheap literature, its production, marketing and readership, in other language communities. However, his conclusions about the Irish book-trade are, for lack of evidence, severely circumscribed by qualifications when he compares our national experience with others - we just do not have exhaustive inventories of publishers' issues or of booksellers' stocks and trade.
Ó Ciosáin makes good use of what evidence survives and makes some estimates of market penetration based on, for example, the ratios of pedlars to population - pedlars, we know, were the main distributors of chapbooks outside the larger towns. Galway was among the most heavily peddled areas in 1851, Mayo among the least peddled. But representation per county may mislead, Galway city and Ballinasloe could account for the high ratio of pedlars to population, while Connemara might have had very few.

Similarly, in extrapolating earlier literacy rates from later census data, he has made a careful allowance for the fact that the literacy of the elderly in the mid-19th. century may be the literacy of the better-off classes of the late 18th. - the better-off classes would have had more schooling and also better health and survival rates. The levels of schooling are also discussed. ( I almost wrote schoolification or schoolisation - one must be careful to avoid the neologisms of modern sociologists.)

In discussing the role of the churches in language replacement or maintenance, he makes an illuminating comparison with the experience of Brittany, where the catholic counter-reformation insisted on Breton-speaking missionaries and produced a mass of popular religious and thence secular literature.

Ó Ciosáin's conclusion that literacy in Irish became available via literacy in English is well supported. While his chosen genres do not admit more than incidental reference to broadside ballads and catechisms, one must regret this, as these two forms, close to the people, illustrate certain aspects of the debate. He refers to the printing, mainly in Cork, of broadside ballads in Irish, and gives a relatively clear example of what he calls, following Cullen, 'phonetic' script: 'Is the ve ban oceal ...' (Is do bhí bean uasal ...). Other examples could be readily cited which are so barbarous, in drafting and/or in printing, that they can have been no more than *aides-mémoire* to someone who already knew the words being read. Further, in all but a very few cases, the ballad headings are in English,

as are the introductions to the catechisms, and many of the ballads are macaronic, and must have been sold to a bilingual readership. And Thomas Hughes, introducing the ninth edition, mid-nineteenth century, 'in an improved form' of Kirwan's western catechism, in the 'Roman' letter, expresses the hope that it will be approved by the laity 'being spelled according to the pronunciation,' (a likely story!) 'and as they have been in the habit of reading it from manuscript.' One would so love to know how many there were who were in the habit of reading these manuscripts written more or less in accordance with the conventions of English orthography. Such orthography is a characteristic of later western Irish language manuscripts, certainly, but it is no more 'phonetic' than the orthography of any other alphabet-using language. The missionary effort of the protestant churches was, as he points out, more in keeping with the earlier norms of Irish, but whether this helped their missionary effort among the mass of the people must remain open to doubt. One protestant catechism, of 1841, which described itself as 'ag taisbeanadh príomh earraidibh eaglais na Roimhe,' was in the 'Gaelic' letter and included interesting terminolgies such as 'Pápanacht' and 'neamhthuitmheachd' ('infallibility'). It was hardly a catechism in the conventional sense, the answers to the questions being chunks of polemic far too long for rote learning. But it was traditional in that it concluded with a four-line colophon in the manuscript manner: *A leightheoir ghráidh' cur do phaidir,/Chum Mhic De, air son Pheadair,/ 'Snach raibh tu chóidhch' a gcás trúaighe;/ 'Sé so mo ghuidh' a nAthbúaidhe./Peadar ua Dalaigh.*

That ninth edition of Kirwan was published by C.M.Warren, a voluminous Dublin printer of chapbooks in the nineteenth century. The inadequate index in Ó Ciosáin's work will not lead you to the account, pp. 57-8, of Warren's activities, with an abstract of his list, confirmed by the back wrapper of one of his chapbooks, itemising some fifty 'books printed and published' by him, including Ó Ciosáin's sources, *Valentine and Orson, Paul and Virginia, Seven Champions of Christendom, Seven wise masters and mistresses of Rome,* chivalric romantic tales descended from the courtly story-telling of the late middle ages, *Irish rogues and rapparees, Life and adventures of James Freney,* a number of improving manuals, O'Reilly's *History of Ireland* and *Battle of Aughrim, and siege of Londonderry* (together).

Popular literature, despite the courtly origin of much of it, was deemed demoralising or even subversive by élite commentators - but were things not ever so? Ó Ciosáin, in his conclusions, suggests that it was subversive in a deep way, not by simple glorification of highwaymen but by pre-disposing the mass of the people towards a nostalgia for the pre-plantation regime or by reinforcing that nostalgia. While one may have reservations about that conclusion, his journey to it is a fascinating trip along little-trodden by-ways of social, demographic, economic, religious and literary and bibliographical history.

Alf MacLochlainn

Matthew Stout, *The Irish ringfort*. Four Courts Press in association with the Group for the Study of Irish Historical Settlement, 1997. pp 142, plates, illus, maps, bibliog.

The ringfort is the most common ancient monument found in Ireland today, and also the most widely distributed. There were possibly 45,000 ringforts built in Ireland throughout their period of use, which was the Early Christian Period *circa* 400 to 1200 A.D. However, Matthew Stout tells us that the majority of Irish ringforts and crannogs were most likely built over a short period of time, from the beginning of the seventh century to the end of the ninth century, and that they were roughly contemporary with one another. In this book the author gives us a chronology of scientifically dated ringforts and associated sites from Connaught, Leinster, Munster and Ulster.

*The Irish ringfort* is a fine study of this monument. It is a well researched and well laid-out book, with excellent illustrations and maps. All areas of interest are covered with chapters on morphology, chronology, function, economy, environment, distribution, with the last chapter on Early Christian settlement and society. The author indicates that once a ringfort was constructed, it seems unlikely that it would ever be used for any other purpose. It is possible that some sites functioned exclusively as livestock enclosures. It is also possible that in a sampled rushed excavation, evidence of habitation would not be recognised. One argument he uses for this theory is that a ringfort could have a domestic function at first and later become an animal enclosure (ringfort at Lisngade, Down). I would agree, because today in some areas, stone forts still serve this purpose. Special attention is paid to the nationwide distribution of various parts of the country. It is a detailed countrywide analysis of areas of low and high density, with north-east Connaught having the highest density of ringforts in Ireland. This area comprises all of Sligo, north Roscommon, the baronies of Leitrim in north-west Leitrim and Gallen in north-east Mayo. The most significant coastal concentration in Ireland occurs in a 5km wide band from Killala Bay around to Sligo Bay, continuing as far north as Mullaghmore Head. Included in this chapter is a very fine distribution map of ecclesiastical enclosures and Early Christian churches.

Hypothetical models are used in the final chapter, which helps the author to bring to life the society inhabiting these settlements. He also uses contemporary written sources to highlight the lives of these people. The everyday human activity of the ringfort dweller, cooking, beer making, tending the sick, playing games, musical entertainment and drinking are all mentioned. The latter two activities lead me to believe that times having changed, people have not. This chapter shows the relationship between the various levels of society, and how one might be able to advance up the social ladder. In addition to the animal husbandry practiced by these people, we learn of the harvesting of peat from Ardee Bog around 900 AD, and the collecting of seaweed for use as fertiliser for tillage and vegetable growing. He gives us an example of the harsher realities of Early Christian life in Ireland, reminding us of one particular unit of exchange, the female slave, with a plate of the Lagore hostage collar.

Although it does not contain an index, the publication of this book should be well received by all who have an interest in ringforts and indeed rural settlement. It is a book which covers a very broad monument type. When one considers the vast amount of such monuments which dot our landscape, it is surprising that so much valuable information should be readily available in 142 pages. The text is backed up with comprehensive

footnote references. It is the first book to take advantage of the data compiled during the new all-Ireland Archaeological Surveys, carried out by the Office of Public Works, and the Heritage Service (DOE NI). It concludes with a substantial bibliography. In my opinion, it is a book which the archaeological world has long awaited. It should be in all reference libraries.

William Henry

*Béaloideas – The Journal of the Folklore of Ireland Society*. Vol. 64/5, 1996-7, edited by Séamas Ó Catháin. Dublin, 1997. 453pp, illus., no price given. ISSN 0332-270X.

Volume 64/5 of *Béaloideas* under the present general editorship of Séamas Ó Catháin brings together an impressive collection of contributions which range geographically from County Limerick to Nova Scotia and thematically from the Famine to Breton Ballads.

Vivien Hick bases her article on the depiction of Palatines in Irish folk tradition, with their characterisation in novels and travellers' accounts from the late eighteenth and the first half of the nineteenth century used as comparison; the material under discussion was collected between the 1930 and 1960 and is kept in the archives of the Folklore Department. Those Protestant Palatines whose ancestors, for various reasons, came over from Germany at the beginning of the 18th century and were settled mostly in Counties Limerick and, to a lesser extent, Kerry, Wexford and Tipperary, wrote or told very little about themselves; information we have has been related by neighbours and travellers. Though this oral tradition may not always be as accurate and reliable as historical fact and balanced evidence, it nevertheless reflects the level of acceptance and rejection of these settlers. Initial resentment and jealousy on the part of their neighbours, at what was believed to be the Palatines' more favourable treatment by the landlords, can be detected. Accounts illustrate that even in areas where the Palatines had lived for very long periods, they were still to a greater or lesser degree perceived by their neighbours as strangers. It is interesting to notice that much of the anti-Palatine material is of a type which is told about other groups of outsiders (such as defiling wells and preventing Catholics from making their rounds.)

The novelist Gerald Griffin (1803-1840) made the greatest use of Palatine characters – in general not very likeable stereotypes; Griffin's depictions greatly influenced later popular views of the Palatines.

But the Palatines became inevitably more and more like the people around them in speech and accent, manner and customs; all that divided them was the difference in religion. Positive views expressed by early travellers such as Arthur Young prevailed into our time: Palatines were always renowned for their husbandry and were perceived as shrewd tradesmen and good workers who kept their neat houses and farms well and grew fruit, flowers and vegetables in their nice gardens. Songs were made about them, and stories abound which tell of their knowledge of cures. The popular perception in the 19th and 20th century of the Palatines as peaceful people who took no part in political or sectarian quarrels and who were, therefore, rarely molested, has been proven to be untrue; they supplied the bulk of the local yeomanry, for example. During the time of the

Land League on the other hand, Palatines openly took part in meetings and many of them subscribed to battle funds; Palatines also fought in the Boer War and took part in the Easter Rising 1916 against British forces. Hick's articles – appended to it are 14 items from the archives in the Folklore Department – highlights some specific aspects and is a welcome addition to O'Connor's and Renzing's comprehensive studies in book form.

Patricia Lysaght analyses the position of women during the famine period from the perspective of the Irish oral tradition – a tradition which retains harrowing recollections of the impact the Great Famine had on family, community and the way of life. Her essay is based on the extensive body of material collected by the Irish Folklore Commission from the early 1930s onwards, especially on the results of a questionnaire on the Great Famine which was circulated by the Commission to its regular correspondents on the hundredth anniversary of the famine in 1945. Most of the informants who assisted with the compilation of this questionnaire were children or grandchildren of those who were the immediate witnesses of the famine and thus grew up surrounded by the physical and psychological legacy of the tragedy. As in the case of the Palatines, oral material is not always an historical record, it is rather an indicator of attitudes, and of private or semi-public reaction to the famine at the time or later.

Lysaght argues convincingly that much of the narrative of the famine concerning women was in the form of *exemplum-type* migratory legends and was told in a variety of contexts in Irish folk tradition.

Circumstances and incidents during famine times affecting the plight of women and children were regarded as exceptional. Thus out of necessity it was often left to the women to look after fever victims and carry the dead to the cemeteries and bury them there. The famine led to an erosion of social norms, and the high level of famine mortality placed severe strain on age-old customs of neighbourliness, especially in relation to the burial of the dead. One hears of scenes where 'the shroudless and coffinless dead were buried without ceremony in family or in mass graves, in the tumbled rubble of their fever-infested homes, or even abandoned by the wayside'. Widowed women were usually at the mercy of the landlord, but occasionally they assumed a position of power when, as Lysaght points out, they resorted to ritual cursing which features in a number of contexts in the oral traditions of the famine.

The wren is one of the smallest birds, and, so it is said, also the king of birds (The etymology of various languages testifies to that; and even where this is not the case, specific tales confirm that the wren is the king of all birds.) Tales about the wren in Irish tradition and the ritual surrounding this bird in Ireland – such as the wren-hunt on Christmas Day, when it is killed with a blackthorn or a holly stick by men or boys generally known as 'wren' boys or in Irish as *lucht an dreoilín*, wearing the skin of animals and straw, followed by a procession taking place on the following St Stephen's Day – are discussed by Sylvie Muller; she argues that the wren may be interpreted as enacting the sacrificial killing of Man by nature: the wren is king because by dying it feeds the world in advance and thus guarantees renewal and the continued capacity to provide sustenance for Man.

Muller briefly touches upon a question with much wider implications, i.e. the shift from a matriarchal to a patriarchal society. Due to the reversal in the relationship between Man and Nature in the Neolithic period by the introduction of agriculture and stock-breeding, she argues, women, just like Nature, tend to fall under the sexual and social domination of Man.

Priests in the Gaelic Folklore of eastern Nova Scotia must have been a cheerful bunch – judging by the anecdotes, jokes, stories collected by Kenneth E. Nilsen. Irish clergymen were prominent in Gaelic Scotland, from 1700 they were supplemented by native highlanders as priests. Highland Catholic emigration to Nova Scotia set in towards the end of the 18th century, the earliest of these settlers – the Heffernans, Carrolls and Farrells – landed in an area where there was no resident Catholic clergyman and where the Presbyterian minister felt these newcomers to be 'dangerous guests in our congregation, not so much from their strength of their arguments for Popish doctrines, but from the powerful influence of their profane conversation, naughty diversions, jestings, which are not convenient or decent, and their telling of extravagant stories of miracles done by priests, and absurd tales about ghosts, witches and fairies.'

Tugann Séamas Ó Catháin léargas suimiúil dúinn ar dhraíocht na laincise 'Gleipnir' san *Edda* trí thagairt a dhéanamh do sheanchas na Lochlannach. Aimsíonn sé cosúlacht shuntasach idir thraidisiún na nGael agus thraidisiún na Lochlannach. Chleachtaíodh na Gaeil nós na leathchoise Lá Fhéile Bríde. Bhíodh an nós céanna ag na Lochlannaigh ag na féilte 'Thorrablót' agus 'Góbalót'. Deasghnáth coitianta eile a bhí i gcleachtadh na leathbhróige. De réir an Ragnarök ba lena leathbhróg a mharaigh vidarr an mac tíre Fenrir. Filleann Ó Catháin go fóirsteanach ar thús na haiste agus cuireann sé argóintí chun an gaol idir na hainmneacha 'Gleipnir' agus 'Vidar' a chruthú.

In his reappraisal of historical references to Manx traditional music, song and dance, David Speers discusses the problem of authenticity in the 'revival' of traditional music and dance in the Isle of Man. Speers concludes that dance music together with the dances, was substantially similar to that of the neighbouring traditions of Ireland and Scotland; he sounds a warning note when he states that much of the music and dance material currently presented as being 'traditional' or 'Manx', must be treated with reservation and should be viewed in a wider British/Irish, and not just English context.

A very vivid portrait covering the deep friendship between Seamus Ennis and Colm Ó Caodháin, especially in the years 1942 to 1947, is painted by Ríonach uí Ógáin. In the singing and music tradition of Conamara, Colm was held in particularly high esteem and supplied Seamus, who was the then Irish Folklore Commission's full-time collector of music and song, with countless songs and tales, with song-lore, riddles, proverbs, curses, blessings and other items from his immense repertoire. When Ennis started collecting, he had only pen and paper with which to work; from 1944 onwards Seamus was able to have recordings made with the help of an *ediphone*.

At the end of the last century Irish was the vernacular of most people in that area for whom fishing was the common occupation. Uí Ógáin mentions that the demise of Irish in the townland of Glinsce had already started when Seamus worked there in the 1940s. The area had experienced population decline and seen a good deal of hardship, including hunger, illness and emigration. The people were poor, but independent and as far as possible self-sufficient; they were 'extremely wealthy in other ways'. Colm was always proud of the rich tradition in his family and of the fact that he could trace his own ancestors for generations; most of his songs, and the accompanying enthusiasm, he had inherited from his grandfather and grandmother. He was particularly close to his father who taught him to fish and farm and generally make his way in life. Genuine love of music and folkore made Colm and Seamus very compatible and this resulted in an extraordinarily productive relationship. As Seamus said: 'I often went to sea for a day

fishing with Colm. We would bring two cases of buttermilk along with us and new potatoes and a pot with a hole in it to light a turf fire where there would be a draught and we would pull mackerel out of sea and clean it and put it down on the turf to roast.'

*From the Field* lists transcriptions of miscellaneous recordings. ('An Easter Ross Mermaid', 'How a Rineen Family Survived the Famine', 'Raca Breá Mo Chinn', 'On the Streets of Dublin').

In *Memoriam* looks back on the lives and the pioneering work of four great men who sadly died in 1996: Proinnsias de Búrca, Liam Mac Coisdeala, Michael J. Murphy and Seán Ó Súilleabháin who had such a long and distinguished career as archivist to the Irish Folklore Commission.

Extensive reviews round up this very substantive volume.

Hermann Rasche

Mike Cronin, The Blueshirts and Irish Politics. Four Courts Press, Dublin 1997. 224 pp £19.95. ISBN 1-85182-333-6.

Mike Cronin's new book. *The Blueshirts and Irish Politics*, is the first major work to deal with the movement since Maurice Manning's 1971 publication, *The Blueshirts*. As well as drawing on recently-released government papers and private collections, Cronin crucially broadens the emphasis of conventional historiography on the Blueshirts by affording equal importance to the direct testimony and memories of ordinary rank-and-file members. Conventionally, most of the historical debate on the Blueshirts has focused on either the fascist dimension or the Civil War link. Is it legitimate, it is asked, to label the Blueshirts the Irish wing of a general European fascist movement between the wars? Or, can we see in the Blueshirt skirmishes with the IRA and with the de Valera government the last hostile embers of Civil War animosities? What Cronin's book seems to suggest is that these are not, perhaps, the most important questions.

The abiding image conjured up in the popular imagination by the movement led by General Eoin O'Duffy is the blueshirt (or blouse) uniform and the straight arm, 'Hail O'Duffy' salute. The failure of European historians of the twentieth century to satisfactorily define the phenomenon of 'fascism' makes it inevitable that any conclusion about whether Blueshirt fascism went deeper than surface symbols runs the risk of being little more than a vague semantic exercise. Most historians tend to dismiss the significance of the fascist link, echoing J.J. Lee, who described the Blueshirts as "traditional conservatives decked out in fashionable, if ill-fitting, continental garb". Those who go further than this use terms such as 'proto-fascist' or 'potential para-fascist'. Cronin's preference is for the latter term.

The fact is that Benito Mussolini, after his Concordat with Pius XI in 1929, was, so to speak, a 'trendy' figure in catholic Ireland. A popular movement would not suffer from plagiarising the external trappings of his vigorous Blackshirts. As for ideology, anti-communism was the political juggernaut of all successful European fascist movements. In an Irish context, the avowed anti-communism of the Blueshirts was rather a case of St. George without the dragon. The incoherence and supine quiescence of the labour and trade union leadership after independence rendered talk of any mass revolt of the

working class just that-talk. Anti-communism was, however, a popular catch-cry in 1930s Ireland, with the Church behaving, as Dermot Keogh observes, as if 'when Joseph Stalin woke up every morning his first thoughts turned inexorably towards the subversion of Catholic Ireland'. Corporatism, a rather hazy prerequisite for fascist membership, in any case, was a Church-approved, faddish economic wave in inter-war Europe, towards which even de Valera would inch a cautious toe in the 1940s.

In terms of Irish political life, Cronin stresses the centrality of the economic war as the main factor behind Blueshirt membership. Privations as a result of the economic war were most acute between June 1932 and December-January 1934-35, when de Valera signed the Coal-Cattle pact with Britain; a period that coincides neatly with the period of maximum Blueshirt popular support and activity. Between 1931 and 1934 the value of Irish exports dropped by £18 million, as de Valera went in quest of a self-sufficient nation. Unemployment and emigration rose, and many thousands, especially in the areas where dairy farming predominated, flocked to the Blueshirts in defence of their 'economic security and their localised power'.

Cronin's final chapter, 'Politics as Pastime: The Blueshirt Social life', makes the suggestion that for the ordinary Blueshirt it was not the attraction of right-wing ideologies or an atavistic regrinding of old Civil War axes that led over 47,000 members to join the movement, but, rather, alarm at de Valera's economic policy combined with the hitherto overlooked fact of "what great fun it was to be a Blueshirt". In an Ireland largely bereft of any decent range of leisure activities, the sports events – including football, hurling, cycling, athletics and mountaineering – social occasions and, above all, the dances organised by the Blueshirts ensured large popular support.

The link between the economic war and leisure is an important one, because, as subsequent rural surveys, such as Hugh Brody's 'Inishkillane' and the 1962 Limerick Rural Survey vividly demonstrated, the emigration of the late 1920s and 1930s was of an ideologically different kind to any wave of emigration that had gone before. The powerful influence of emigrant letters, of radio, and, especially, of the wildly popular cinema, made young people increasingly aware of the opportunities and sheer wonder of the outside world, in contrast to the increasingly closed the limited horizons of life in rural Ireland. Emigration was gradually evolving from a national economic necessity – a sacrifice – to a consciously-expressed preference. Land would become a burden rather than a privilege for many a farmer's son. It was a situation that would ultimately lead to the demoralising crisis in rural Ireland during the 1950s.

The Blueshirts undoubtedly constituted a political movement, potentially radical, called into existence by the economic and political policies of Fianna Fáil. But they were also the first movement to reflect in a clearly affirmed sport, social and leisure programme the evolving needs for entertainment and stimulation in rural Ireland. As such, they may, in certain respects, be seen as being related – albeit in complex ways – to such organisations as Muintir na Tíre, Macra na Feirme and the I.C.A.

Michael Farrelly

# Galway Archaeological & Historical Society

## RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 1 NOVEMBER, 1997

| | £ | | £ |
|---|---|---|---|
| Receipts | | Payments | |
| Members' Subscriptions | 5,278.68 | Cost of printing Journal, 1997, vol 49 | 5,290.00 |
| Sale of back issues | 711.91 | Postage | 322.38 |
| Sale of 1997 journals to | | Stationery & minute book | 84.00 |
| bookshops | 260.00 | Public Liability Insurance | 130.00 |
| Subvention from UCG | 500.00 | Rent of hotel room for meetings | |
| Bank Interest | 32.19 | & lectures | 125.00 |
| (Note: | | Lecture expenses | 259.34 |
| The interest on savings certificates | | Expenses of Journal Editor | 100.00 |
| and Savings Bond is not included) | | Secretarial Expenses | 20.00 |
| | | Gift | 19.68 |
| | | Membership of the Federation | 20.00 |
| | | of Local History Societies | |
| | | Excess of receipts over payments | 412.38 |
| | 6,782.78 | | 6,782.78 |

## BALANCE SHEET AS AT 1 NOVEMBER, 1997

| | £ | | £ |
|---|---|---|---|
| Capital | 12,951.30 | Savings Certificates | 4,500.00 |
| Add excess of receipts | | Post Office Savings Bond | 5,200.00 |
| over payments for | | Bank Deposit Account | 1,298.14 |
| the year | 412.38 | Bank Current Account | 2,355.54 |
| | | Prize Bond | 10.00 |
| | | Cash in hand | Nil |
| | 13,363.68 | | 13,363.68 |

Membership – 510

Signed: Bernard O'Hara

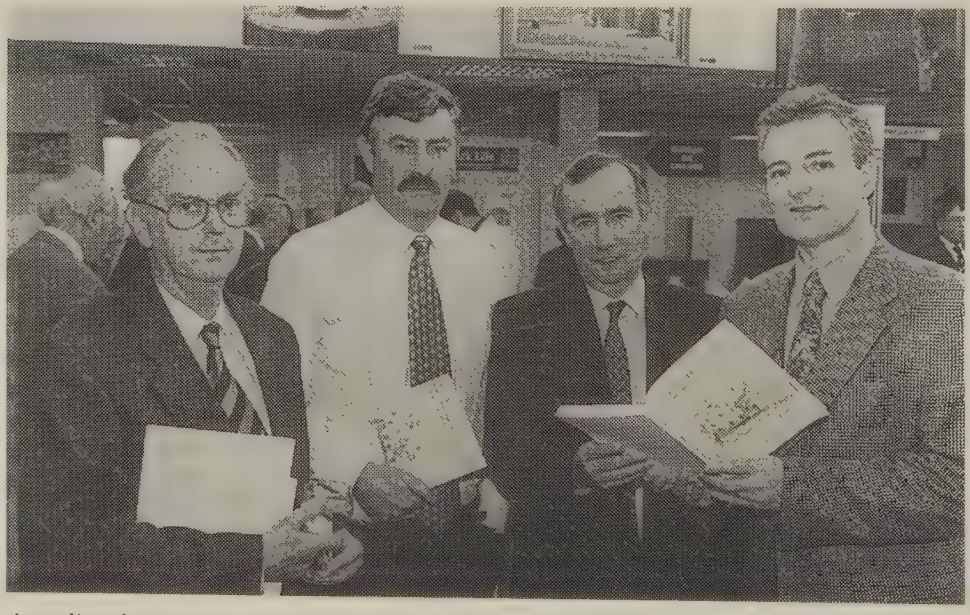
Bernard O'Hara,
Hon. Treasurer.

# PUBLICATION OF VOLUME 49 (1997) OF THE *JOURNAL*

Volume 49 of the Society's *Journal* was launched at a reception at Lynch's Castle, Galway on the 4th June 1997 by the Galway City Manager, Joe Gavin. The reception was kindly hosted by the Allied Irish Bank and was attended by over one hundred guests.

The President, Peadar O'Dowd, expressed the Society's gratitude to the bank for their assistance and to Mr. Gavin for his courtesy and for his praise of the *Journal*, and to those responsible for its success.

Jack Mulveen,
Hon. Secretary



Attending the reception at the Allied Irish Bank, Lynch's Castle, to announce the publication of Vol. 49 of the *Journal* were: Joe O'Halloran, Editor of the *Journal*; Jack Mulveen, Secretary of the Society; Joe Gavin, Galway City Manager who officially launched the publication, and Jack King, Allied Irish Bank, Lynch's Castle, Galway.

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